Florence Fowler. 1923

THE
TRUTHS WE LIVE BY

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BY

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TO MY FRIEND

JOHN DIELL BLANTON

ONE OF THE TYPE OF MEN
THAT WILL NOT LET
THE GREAT VERITIES PERISH

1824048

PREFACE

This book is the outcome of two very different sorts of experience: one, the teaching of philosophy in a typical American university; the other, the frequent discussion of problems of philosophic import before the larger public. Both of these experiences have convinced the writer that what our time sorely needs is an ethical reconstruction in the light of the new intellectual trends of the day,—a new grounding of the great verities of life and mind that will be convincing to the men who actively participate in contemporary civilization.

Such an ethical reconstruction is made directly necessary by the fact that modern science has seemed slowly and effectively to have destroyed many of the old beliefs that were once the safeguards of the moral order. How many, indeed, of those acquainted with the meaning of scientific progress can retain any sure confidence in such intangible things as the Moral Ideal, or Immortality, or God, or the Freedom of the Will? In general men of to-day are divided into two great classes in their attitudes toward such matters; they either accept the agnosticism of science, or they take refuge in a faith that presumes to ignore science. Both attitudes have one thing in common,—a grievous lack of appreciation of the importance of the great veri-

ties for practical life as expressed in the individual and in his social institutions.

These attitudes of the contemporary mind are unfortunate, and ultimately disastrous. For what we are accustomed to call the great verities are of immense practical significance; a faith in them which takes no account of modern scientific thought will end in inevitable doubt; and, while the agnosticism of science is sound so far as science goes, it is not final, since it happens that the logic of science is not the only logic there is. The difficulty is that most men of culture tend to think so. For the chief reason for the prevalent skepticism concerning life's fundamental problems is the widespread belief that the range of natural science and of human reason are synonymous; that not only what science demonstrates is true, but that what it cannot or does not demonstrate is either beyond decision or is thereby disproved.

One of the principal aims of this book is to show the utter falsity of this position. No one values the achievements of natural science more than the writer. No one is less desirous of disputing a single scientific fact or law. But he, in common with any one else who has investigated and taught scientific method, is naturally more cautious than is the average man either in drawing sweeping conclusions from scientific hypotheses, or in assuming that reason has had its utmost say when natural science has given its last word. Reason is larger than the reason of that special enterprise called science; it has other methods of proof precisely as cogent as

are science's demonstrations. It is through such a reason that the writer undertakes to prove the truths we live by,—the truths which many men have practically abandoned, not so much because they have thought as because they have not thought enough. Grant if you please that many of the old arguments for the great verities are now foolish, this does not render the great verities themselves foolish, provided there are other reasons, in harmony with science, that demand them and amply justify them.

The writer begins with the concrete conflicts of our own day because they strenuously demand the great verities for their solution, and because out of them has already begun to emerge a desire, however vague, for the spiritual reconstruction of civilization. Such a reconstruction is then attempted in an argument for a definite sort of moral order, followed by proofs of the truths essential to confidence in it—namely, Immortality, God, and Freedom of Choice. Then follows the discovery that the moral order reached is no more or less than what we mean by modern democracy when significantly interpreted. The final problem is to trace how far present tendencies, especially in current religion and in the general temper of the American people, are toward such a moral order and its great faiths. In discussing religious tendencies, the writer has avoided matters of religious controversy, and has addressed himself to religion only as it touches practical concerns. He has tried to make clear the invaluable function of religion in civilization; and it may be

that his message will be of help to those in religious doubt, as well as to those who teach the great verities in the name of religion, and who face the many logical difficulties now in their way.

Obviously, this book is not written for professional philosophers. It is written for men and women of average education who have not specialized in philosophy, but who are, nevertheless, interested in life's greater problems. There are not many technicalities. Yet, the intention has been to be exact; and when the choice has been between ease of style on the one hand and precision on the other, the latter has been favored. Beneath all that appears in these pages there is, of course, a systematic philosophy of things, a world-view, which is the deeper foundation for what is here visible.

J. W. H.

AIGNAN, FRANCE

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PART I

MORAL CONFLICT AND SKEPTICISM

THE TRUTHS WE LIVE BY

CHAPTER I

THE PRESENT CONFLICT OF IDEALS

THERE have been ages of moral conflict, and there have been ages of moral skepticism. This age is both. Practically, men are resolutely fighting for a multitude of ideals, so there is moral conflict; theoretically, they are in great doubt, and there is moral skepticism. For the man of to-day tends to regard the truth about life's ideals as merely a point of view; and are there not many points of view, each justified in its own way? Uneducated men may still believe that there is a never-changing distinction between right and wrong,—that is, between good and bad ideals of life; but the mind attuned to modern culture is inclined to think that right and wrong and the ideals they serve are chiefly matters of convention. What is clearer than that all morals grew out of the passing stress of circumstance; that what is good in one age is bad in another; and that even in the same age morality varies with race and country?

So, theoretically, the contemporary man tends to be a moral skeptic. Of course he is ready to insist

that this does not mean the breakdown of morals, or that any one may do as he pleases. There are ways of living to which every sensible person will conform. The sensible man will regard the customs and institutions of his country with a decent respect; otherwise the welfare of society would not be secure for one moment. Yet if asked further just what this "welfare of society" really means, this same sensible man is not certain to the point of defining it; and surely he does not desire to be pressed regarding it. In fact he very much fears that any attempt at close definition may lead to moral dogmatism,—which he considers a very bad thing for that most praised of modern intellectual virtues, open-mindedness.

When any one, opposing this skeptical view, insists upon discovering any hard and fast distinction between what is right and what is wrong, he straightway risks being dubbed "old-fashioned," hopelessly behind those who count themselves among the "liberated" and the "enlightened." For the enlightened man of to-day knows something of history. He looks back over thousands of years and views a bewildering panorama of quite various moral ideals bitterly battling with one another for recognition; conquering one by one; going down to defeat one by one; dominating this civilization and that in turn; each passing to forgetfulness; each superseded; each rising again; and all surviving inexplicably to continue the never-ending struggle in his own civilization. He may well ask,

Where is any certain tune
Or measured music in such notes as these?

If there is any absolute moral standard, what is it? Custom? But there are all sorts of conflicting customs. Which of them is right? Laws of nature? But even laws of nature change with man's knowledge; and besides, one cannot violate a law of nature anyway, even if one would. And where one can do no wrong no morals are at stake. Laws of men? But legislators are fallible and legislatures differ, and men have never held much moral awe for them. Laws of God? But there are many supposed revelations of God's will, and each has its multitudinous interpretations. Conscience? But people's consciences differ surprisingly, and even the conscience of the same person is bafflingly uncertain and often inconsistent at different times. Is happiness the true ideal of men? But what is happiness? How is it measured? And how can one foretell what deeds will bring happiness or misery in the long run? Is it asceticism, the mortification of the flesh? Perhaps. But this, or such other prominently urged ideals as the life of reason, or the glorification of the will in the life of deeds, are either very vague or insist upon fighting with each other and with all the rest.

I

If one should choose from all these various conflicts one example for conspicuous emphasis, one

might select the current conflict between the moral motive of pleasure on the one hand and that of self-sacrifice on the other,—both prominent and contradictory motives of contemporary life. The contradiction of hedonism and sacrifice, of the pleasure-seeker and the ascetic, is of course not new; it has furnished one of the most picturesque contrasts to be found in history. It has afforded light and shadow for many a dramatic use, and has dominated the meaning of entire civilizations. These two contradictory spirits, the worldly and the unworldly, are ever with us. We very frequently find them in our own persons, each clamorous for expression, each denying the other. The story of the Puritan and the Pagan, both living in the same body, ever warring with one another, one looking out on the world with the eye of duty, the other with the eye of beauty, going to the same grave together, by whose gray stone grows the red rose,—such a story has a strangely intimate appeal to such Americans as seriously embody their country's moral history.

From one point of view our age is indubitably an age of pleasure-seeking. Ours is the hedonistic creed. One way of finding the temper of a people is to observe the social sets that are looked up to for guidance and emulation. Now, it is clear that American social sets exist not primarily for intellectual or even esthetic culture, but for the achievement of pleasure. For society in America, this has become a strenuous social business, and has almost assumed the character of a social art. This hedon-

istic ideal is the real meaning of the insistence upon such personal qualities as pleasing manners, geniality, cleverness, and *savoir faire.* The highest compliment that one person can yield another is the hedonistic tribute that he or she is "charming." Again, this ideal is the real reason why foreigners find that among us such topics as religion, business, and politics are discouraged in polite conversation. For conversation must possess the hedonistic charm of freshness, vivacity, wit, and an engaging and sympathetic intelligence which leads thought in pleasant places without requiring intellectual work. This hedonistic ideal needs wealth to make it possible, and is the deeper meaning of wealth as a social advantage. Such hedonism is expressed in the dress of the American woman, causing her to be considered by many as the best dressed woman in the world. This hedonism, requiring wealth for its satisfaction, is most of all to be found in the "social function." Here it is that society as a hedonistic art comes to its expert expression. And the people at large tend, within their limits of opportunity, to adopt this same search for pleasure as a secondary religious creed. They take it so seriously that it is hard, nay, almost impossible for Americans to cultivate the virtue of thrift. It is this hedonistic ideal that causes them to live beyond their incomes. With multitudes of people the right to achieve pleasure is even the fundamental moral duty, and its achievement the supreme test of the successful life.

But current life presents a contradiction to all

this, that challenges such an estimate of the American people as utterly false. The American is no soft player of lutes in a court of fountains. He is a fighter; and his capacity for quiet sacrifice and heroic suffering is one of his conspicuous traits, and one which he admires most in the men that have made America what it is. Fortunate has been the public man who could point to the humble log cabin as his birthplace; it is the symbol of struggle and privation. No people in the world are more susceptible to the appeal of great causes that demand the devotion of combat and self-abnegation. If the cause is great enough they will "give until it hurts" of money, of comforts, yes, of flesh and blood. There is something deeper than the search for pleasure in American life, something that contradicts such a search as small and low and superficial. It is to be found in the strenuous hardness and courage of its millions of business men and women, of its thousands of teachers who subsist on little pay, and endure much privation for the conviction of a work worth while. While the American is too sober of mind to seek anything so fantastic as martyrdom, he is of the spirit of which martyrs are made. Even much of his play is the play that demands capacity for hardship, as prize-fighting and football. A transcontinental air-race, involving accident and death, appeals to the American as a sport supremely of his mood. It is a reflection of his hardy ideal of life.

This, as well as the other contradictory outlooks

upon life, occur to-day not only in different sets of men opposing one another; they are just as likely to belong to one and the same man. John C. Van Dyke mentions that the Italian of the Renaissance was a paradoxical being, full of the most surprising contradictions. "One side of his nature was often aspiring, inventive, artistic, philosophical; the other side was quite as often skeptical, treacherous, immoral, polluted. He could doubt and he could believe with equal freedom; he could be cultured and yet debased; he could saturate himself with crime and corruption, yet rhapsodize over things esthetic and kneel at the altar of Christianity. Our nineteenth-century wonder at this strange marriage of Beauty and the Beast is perhaps pardonable. How a man could be enlightened, refined, devout, brave, and yet break almost every one of the ten commandments we fail to understand."[1] The American, while fortunately not this undesirable blending of good and evil, is yet as contradictory in his own way. The same man is rational and credulous, practical and idealistic, a pleasure-seeker and a heroic exemplar of impossible sacrifice. In him are apt to be all the contradictory ideals that we have named. And like the man of the Renaissance, he knows not that it is he himself, that it is these very contradictions in himself, that are at the bottom of most of the problems he now struggles with and futilely seeks to

[1] *Memoirs of Benvenuto Cellini*, translated by John Addington Symonds, Introduction.

solve. Indeed, it is manifest that up to quite recently most men were relatively unconscious of even the existence of these glaring contradictions of their times; and even now only the few realize them and are prepared to confront them belligerently. For to say that there is any absolute distinction between right and wrong is to raise unwelcome difficulties. It seems the same as to say that some one of this host of conflicting ideals has an absolutely proved precedence over all the others. For conduct can be said to be right only as it leads to whatever is the true ideal, and wrong only as it leads away from it. But who knows enough to settle what is this true ideal? To attempt to do so would be arrant presumption, would it not?

II

Even if it were decided quite rationally that one of these moral standards is the only true one, as, for example, the ideal of pleasure, the crucial question of modern times would still remain: Do we mean the pleasure of society or of the individual? Which is first? In actual practice the world is greatly divided on this question. To-day the most glaring contradiction of all in every civilized country is the contradiction between the individual and society, between personal liberty and social control. On the one hand, it appears to be an age in which the individual has at last found himself and asserts himself

and clamors for his rights. The individual has become so conscious of himself that it sometimes seems that he is conscious of nothing else. American civilization has always meant an unprecedented emphasis upon the value of the individual; and this has meant an unprecedented emphasis upon his possibilities and his rights. In any country, men have ever wanted what they had not; but the individual's *right* to want things, and more, his right to get his wants fulfilled, have never been stressed as in America. This stress has been achieved in various ways. The average American has been gradually attaining a new self-appraisement through democratic education, which ever breeds introspection, and through the democratic spread of the numerous modern agencies that lift even the wage-earner's thoughts beyond his sphere, and the visions of the ordinary business man beyond his desk and counter. The theater—not least the moving-picture theater—the novel, increased travel, the magazines and the newspapers, and now, at last, a new world-outlook, are among the obvious means by which has been awakened in almost every man an appreciation of the life he might be living, compared with the life he actually lives. To this same man, American democracy comes with its gospel of the equality of all men, verified now not only through the practical sovereignty conferred with the ballot, but by the recent vision of suffering and death for democratic ideals. Through this startling sacrifice, the indi-

vidual not only knows his value as a theory, but proves it as a triumphant fact. It is his supreme vindication; through it he is utterly awakened. The "commonwealth of kings" is no longer a poetical flourish. The recent American feels his power; his desires have become demands and his ideals edicts. Yes, the late world-conflict, by its emphasized issues and by the nature of its victory and ensuing peace, has ushered the individual into a sudden, self-conscious maturity. True, it achieved social solidarity as never before; this was a war-time asset of priceless worth. But how was it achieved? By a paradox. By a new and unprecedented stress upon the dignity and rights of the individual man. This stress survives while the new social solidarity wanes as a transient phenomenon. The latter failed to attain the dignity of a fundamental motive.

Yet, in spite of this arrant individualism, never was there such an age of social organization and insistence upon imperative social obligations that nullify the boasted rights that belong to the individual as such. Never was individual liberty so threatened by social constraint. Never was there such a passion for making laws to curb the individual; even what he shall eat and drink is prescribed, or at least proscribed! Yet, on the other hand, never was law more ignored and defied and contravened. Has the individual at last asserted his sovereign rights even in industry, and is he eloquent concerning the coming industrial democ-

racy? Well, social organization in the form of government has been known to enjoin him even from the sacred right of striking. This reign of social imperatives reaches to conscripting by public opinion the individual's contributions to what he used to consider as "charity," a purely voluntary thing to which he might or might not give, as he freely chose. For the idea of charity has given way to that of social justice, and the modern "drive" for contributions has the immense weight of the social force behind it. Never was the individual so boldly clamorous; yet never was the individual so utterly annulled! It is by contradictions like this that social orders are revised or destroyed.

So crucial has this conflict between the individual and society come to be, especially in politics and in economics, that to many it seems to threaten the dissolution of democracy. How far may social organization, political or other, encroach upon the individual? How far do inalienable personal rights extend,—rights which no social obligation, no social force, may justly ignore? Is there, after all, any solution to this now acute question except the temporary solution of compromise after compromise, each trembling upon the edge of an unstable equilibrium that means revolution? This skeptical attitude is quite prevalent. To many, a resolute attempt to solve this problem seems premature. The world is still young. It is prudent to wait for the further evolution of civilization.

III

Thus, the attitude of the contemporary man toward the ever-present conflict of these and other moral ideals continues to be one of skepticism. Theoretically, that is, he is not prepared to prove absolute and abiding moral convictions. Practically, he is fairly loyal to institutions as they are (if they are not too much in his way), with a faith in their inherent power to progress somehow and to achieve something worth while for him as time goes on. Practically, he will fight with all his soul for what he deems to be right, else the present practical conflict of ideals would not be so healthily vigorous. But bring him to the realm of theory, and he is suddenly uncertain. It is not that the modern man is without ideals, but his is an idealism whose ideal is left undefined, in the mood that says with a somewhat splendid faith,

> Oh yet we trust that somehow good
> Will be the final goal of ill.

To give all the reasons for the advent of this moral conflict and its accompanying skepticism would be impossible. Of course it is partly the result of our large inheritance of accumulated conflicts of history. One very obvious cause is the quite sudden fruition during the last century of a bewilderingly versatile civilization, which took us unawares and challenged into life exceedingly contra-

dictory traits in human nature, which have not yet had time for proper organization and adjustment. But there are two immediate causes that especially stand out. I refer to the influence of modern science on the one hand, and of the World War on the other. The former has meant a theoretical revision and the latter a practical revision of many of our attitudes toward life. It is well to consider these two influences briefly.

Indubitably this is an age of science. In terms of science it is that we hope at last to interpret and master both nature and ourselves. Through science man has at length approximated to the "rational animal" that Aristotle somewhat prematurely said he was. In science we trust; science that has become synonymous with reason. Nature once had her unexplored regions,—regions of mystery where the gods still hid. But now all regions are either science's own, or are in the process of becoming her own. By science, even society has been relentlessly rationalized in its economics, its politics, and its history. There is no further room here for mere traditions, however sanctified by time. And this science of which we boast does not stop in its conquest with the formation of theory; it invades all practical affairs under the name of "efficiency," which is reason applied beyond what we think to what we do. Even the arts, the last refuge of inspiration and the divine afflatus, have not escaped the scientific analysis that would strip naked the

empty pretention of their mysteries and reveal them in their anatomy. Down into the very depths of consciousness has science probed in the name of psychology, until at length, the most sacred emotions and the most complex functions of imagination and dreams have been duly analyzed into their elements, catalogued, and numbered. By this same science the portals of religion have been stormed, and the pulpit now argues from premises of a religion scientifically assayed. By the reasoning spirit of this same science the stronghold of patriotism has been taken, its old loyalties dissected, and the blind passion that warred against a world of enemies has been transmuted into the rationalization of discordant nations in a world-league. Yes, it is indubitably an age of science.

How has this triumph of scientific reason affected morals?

Moral ideals were once accepted on faith from age-long tradition. Tradition was enough. But through the influence of modern science, tradition, which once bequeathed immutable faiths, has lost much of its sanctity. A moral ideal that is based merely upon tradition and custom is now regarded as quite insecure. It may be a broad tentative guide to right living, since it is a summing up of the accumulated experiences of the race; but scrutinized modernly it yields nothing certain. For science reminds us that the customs of men that eventuate in moral laws are nothing more than the products of

the struggle for existence, and depend upon such prosaic contingencies as the particular conditions under which a people happens to live, as climate, soil, topography, and the natural foes and social retardations that must be overcome to make life possible. Change the circumstances and you change the customs; and casual inspection shows that the circumstances change vastly with a shift of locality or with the lapse of a few centuries.

Nor will science any longer allow morals to find an immutable foundation in divine revelation. The general impression is that science considers revelation irrelevant because it involves that unscientific impossibility called a miracle. At any rate, speaking most conservatively, revelation true or false is utterly outside accepted scientific method and demonstration; and to say this is to say that for many cultured minds revelation is growingly doubtful as an approved source of moral truth.

Nor does the authority of conscience fare any better. Analyzed by scientific race-psychology, the conscience of the individual is shown to be merely the unconscious summary of the traditions of the society of which he is a product. The seemingly imperative nature of its commands is easily accounted for by the fact that conscience is the long creation of heredity and of environment, including the countless influences of the society into which one happens to be born. As in the case of custom, so with conscience,

New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth.

Other moral standards have shared the same fate at the hands of science, as we shall see later.[2]

The result of all this upon the man of modern culture is insidiously subtle. He has learned to put faith in science's deliverances as final. And since science cannot justify the moral standards to which most men have been accustomed, he tends to feel skeptical about the demonstrableness of any moral standard whatever.

Long before the World War, science had already achieved the theoretical break-up of traditional beliefs; it remained for the war to make a tremendous practical revision of them. For most men it was a cataclysm of such suddenness and of such immensity that they tended to lose what fragments of faith they still had in the inherent triumph of righteousness, and to transfer their allegiance to materialistic efficiency, with its logic of force, as the only real guarantee and meaning of the right. Further, the war had the effect of undermining the stability of institutions centuries old, as if their foundations were built upon the sands of caprice instead of upon the rock of rational authority. The result is that the great masses of men have now far less reverence for the social order and its apparently impregnable guarantees.

And finally, out of the war an age of reconstruc-

[2] *Cf.* Chapter V.

tion has come, eager enough and hopeful enough, but motived by such a bewildering chaos of divergent social purposes that moral caution and doubt have gained respectability as the safe and sane attitude of reasonable men.

IV

What are the bearings of this widespread conflict of ideals and of this moral skepticism upon the welfare of the contemporary man? What are its effects upon contemporary social institutions and the state? Is moral skepticism a good thing? If it were a skepticism of despair, it might seek a way out of an intolerable situation, and so be a skepticism of promise; but suppose it is a skepticism of indifference?

Such a skepticism of indifference means an arrest at the very center of moral progress, namely, the arrest of the progress of moral truth. It also means an arrest of practical progress along any certain highway, at a time when significant moral problems are demanding immediate solution as never before. Every institution of mankind is involved in the present warfare of ideals. It is found in the competing purposes of even those who are by profession the moral instructors of the times, the preachers and educators, evinced in widely divergent public preachments and in lustily jousting ideals of education. It reveals itself in the vastly varying interpretations of society and of the history of society;

interpretations economic, psychologic, materialistic, spiritualistic, biologic. Even the arts do not escape a conflict of motive and purpose that has its direct moral significance. This moral conflict becomes crucially obvious in contemporary conceptions of the state in its relation to its citizens, in the goals of its hope, in its doctrine of sovereignty, and in its theories of obligations and rights with reference to other states; voiced most loudly in the fight, in the interests of a *mêlée* of motives, for and against a League of Nations. The same conflict is shown in the current definitions of democracy; and most prominently of all in the realm of industry, through the revolutionizing battle increasingly acute between Syndicalists, Anarchists, Socialists, and Bolshevists; between conservatives and radicals; between capitalists and wage-earners; between producers and consumers; a battle which is at bottom a war of moral ideals in their application to current life. True, some of these conflicts are born of great practical loyalties; but most of them are made ineffective or abortive by a lack of rational understanding and hence of rational competence. I fear that here we come to the very heart of the present unrest in America. It is not merely the unrest of dissatisfied wants; it is that much more serious thing, the unrest of not knowing what is wanted. It is the unrest of the man who craves something to satisfy his palate, but knows not just what it is he craves. The appetite is normal enough; it simply has not defined

itself sufficiently. It is thus an experimental unrest, which seeks and tries and rejects and accepts in accordance with a desire that is indeed very real, but which is so vaguely defined that it is not yet a sufficiently self-conscious criterion to be practically and decisively applied. Thus the experimental and tentative character of American social reforms. Ask any cultured American what the ethical ideal of American progress is; he will very likely be at utter loss for an answer. Submit to him the various possible moral ideals, and he will probably not know what to say. He is not accustomed to bringing his ideals, his wants, into such definite consciousness, and he does not like to be forced to the issue.

It is inevitable that an age of moral conflict and skepticism should attain its hazardous results in the regions of personal righteousness. To put the matter in an easy way, it is a difficult time for the birth of a new generation. The standards of the home, even the criteria for the rearing of children, have broken down. The leisure occupations of youth, always symptomatic in any age, are not only unguidedly and frankly hedonistic but across the borders of what was once considered decorous; not because of a new and liberalizing moral standard, as is sometimes pretended, but because of the lack of any. The popularity of certain recent dances, formerly forbidden even in the "red-light" districts, is typical. So is much of our periodical reading matter and any number of "movie" plays, over the

edge of the decadently erotic, with a censorship that does not censor because of moral and financial doubt. A very prominent and conservative university president recently said in public that the present age is the most decadent in history, with the exception of the days just before the fall of the Roman Republic and before the French Revolution. He mentioned "dishonesty, permeating public and private life alike, tainting the administration of justice, tainting our legislative halls, tainting the conduct of private business, polluting at times even the church itself." In the same utterance he averred that "a source of infinite evil in every modern society is impurity of word and act." He went on to assert that "if there is to be social and political regeneration in our Republic and in the rest of the world, it must be by a tremendous regeneration of moral ideals."

Surely such a regeneration means some settlement of the present conflict of moral purposes. It means a transition from moral skepticism to a reasonably founded moral faith. The social reconstruction of the world means its ethical reconstruction. Is the problem solvable? Is it too presumptuous to attempt it? Is there, after all, any absolute distinction between right and wrong in personal and social affairs? If so, what is it? Whatever symptoms of moral distress our age may now evince, it is the supreme business of reasonable men to see that, "so far as the intellectual life of the world goes, this present time is essentially the opening phase of a

period of ethical reconstruction, a reconstruction of which the new republic will possess the matured result." [3]

Let us add that happy is the civilization that possesses within it great contradictions,—if it can solve them. For an age of strenuous contradictions is at least not stagnant; it is aggressively alive, and is a sure begetter of that travail of thought that makes for certain progress. The restless criticism of the Sophists was the prelude to the golden age of Greece. It was only when the long-secure scholasticism of the Middle Ages culminated in sharp contradictions between reason and dogma, between science and faith, between the divine order and the human order, that there emerged the triumphant beginnings of a new era, issuing at last in a new humanism, a new transfiguration of the world in the name of modern art, modern philosophy, and modern science. The contradictions of our own day may mean likewise the silent, pervasive, and certain advance toward a new moral order.

[3] H. G. Wells, *Anticipations*, p. 311.

CHAPTER II

A SOLUTION PROPOSED

Skepticism, moral or other, is the result of a certain amount of thinking. This is the encouraging side of it. It betokens a relatively advanced stage of civilization. But skepticism is never the last word in thinking. It is only one of the steps in intellectual progress, one of the resting places along the highway of truth. Skepticism is the outcome of much thought; but it is likely to disappear with more thought.

The man of to-day has thought just enough to see the fallacies in the traditional forms of what used to be the great verities. He has not thought enough to see that these great verities need not disappear merely because their ancient reasons are faulty. Above all, he has not thought enough to adjust these verities to all the new means of proof that a complete logic insists upon before a final judgment is made. The modern man has thought enough to deny great things; he has not thought enough to affirm great things.

The thoughtful man of to-day cannot remain in pure negation or doubt. Several years ago there was a popular song that ran, "I don't know where

I'm going, but I'm on my way." Seated at night by the inn-fire, foot-weary with futile wanderings and made indifferent to fate by the cheering glass, one may sing such a song with care-free abandon; but it is no challenge to hearten a valiant soul when the sun is up and the mind is clear and a journey lies beyond. Then one demands to know where he is going, that he may indeed be sure that he is on his way.

I

A true idealist without an ideal will find one. The serious citizen of our civilization will not everlastingly confront a multitude of contending purposes with hopeless despair or with supine indifference. This very conflict of ideals he will face as a challenging problem, glad that the race has come to the point where it is so lustily alive as to have such courageously battling purposes; resolute, however, in his insistence that the conflict shall be solved and the crooked ways made straight. That a great cataclysm has shaken up world-old institutions will not breed in him a hopelessness for the social order; rather will it give to him an increased optimism, born of the new consciousness that, after all, social traditions are not so stubborn and unchangeable as they seemed, but are fully capable of drastic remolding and of infinite progress.

It is our purpose, then, resolutely to face the present conflict of ideals and to seek some positive solu-

tion, even though at first none seems obvious. Let us be critical and cautious by all means; but let us not sin against logic by a too ready capitulation to final doubt. If doubt exists as the avowed enemy of dogmatism, it is also true that the worst dogmatism occurs when doubt itself becomes dogmatic.

Abjuring any such dogmatism, we discover that in our moral skepticism we have been guilty of several logical errors. First of all, in our entire attitude toward the question of whether there is any absolute moral standard, any final moral ideal, we have been making an astonishing assumption, which has strangely escaped our notice. Let us see what this assumption is. Perhaps if we once drag it out into the open light, we may be enabled to reach some more satisfactory outcome for our age than the skepticism that not only solves no problems, but allows them to fight a wayward battle, and to place capricious hazards against progress.

In most popular arguments against the possibility of finding an absolute moral standard it is tacitly assumed that the conflicting ideals of mankind are inconsistent with one another and exclude one another. It is taken for granted that we are obliged to choose just one of them as true and abandon all the remainder as false. If this were really the situation, any choice of an ideal would be fatal, for it would leave out many others worth while. Better skepticism than such moral narrowness. It is but common sense to hesitate at the annihilation of all

but one of the many ideals of life that have been gained by the hard-won experience of the race. Thus, if a reasonable man were asked to make a rigidly single choice, from among custom and conscience and pleasure and asceticism and the rest, of a final and never-to-be-changed guide to life, he would end in pardonable and perpetual doubt. As we have seen, this is where reasonable men tend to rest to-day; but it is through a misapprehension of what the problem really is. For the entire question is put wrongly when it is asked, "Which one of the scores of moral standards bequeathed us by history is the right one?" The illuminating truth is that any workable moral criterion whatever involves every one of the rest, as a matter both of logic and of practical experience. *All conflicting moral ideals imply a moral end that includes them all and transcends every one of them. And this all-inclusive moral end is the true standard of right and wrong that ever remains the same amid all moral change.*

The best way to see that any workable moral criterion involves all the rest is to consider the race's experience. Moral standards change with history. This is indubitable. But when a new moral evaluation of life arises, it never means the utter abandonment of the old standards. Moral change occurs not because the old moral ideas were worthless, but because they were merely a part of the whole truth, however necessary a part. What in history seems a panorama of successive views of life supplanting

one another is in reality a progress, a growth, so that what was grows into what is, as the bud grows into the blossom. The blossom does not supplant the bud; it *is* the bud come to its fullness. The historic shifting of moral ideals, so productive of skepticism, is in reality only reasonable moral expansion. Through the centuries each moral ideal annuls not all the rest, but gives genesis to all the rest, one by one, to complete it. Ours is an age of moral conflict just because of this fact; each ideal does not discourage, but stimulates into life the host of its fellows. The conflict becomes baffling only because men will not see that these ideals are not merely contending with one another, but are strenuously calling out for one another, pleading not to be singled out, but to be reconciled and harmonized with one another.

While the puzzling succession of moral standards in history is to be interpreted as really progress toward a larger and larger inclusiveness that finally embraces all of them, it is not progress in a straight line. There are many curves and retrogressions in it. This is why the progress is so difficult to discern at a first glance. But the progress is there, and the truth that each conception of life implies all the rest to complete it is fully attested over and over again, not only by the historical vicissitudes of rival theories, but by the concrete events that make and unmake civilizations. And now, since this is the introductory truth necessary for any ethical recon-

struction of our age, let us be sure of it by looking for a moment at the moral fortunes of the past. These fortunes rehearse the progress of every man in his search for the standard of righteousness.

II

Custom is one of the initial ways by which men determine what is right. Gradually they formulate the more imperative edicts of custom into popular precepts and proverbs, which become much more helpful than unwritten custom alone. But note that such precepts and proverbs do not by any means supplant custom; they *are* custom, now made into sayings that people can repeat to each other.

But the evolution does not stop just here. There are so many precepts concerning all sorts of subjects! Some are not so important as others; some are repetitions of others in a different form; some actually conflict with others. The next step in the search for a moral guide is to reduce these many precepts about right and wrong to a relatively short list of fundamental rules, with some pretense to a coherence and completeness such as a loose multitude of sayings never possesses. The Ten Commandments give us a conspicuous example of a list of this kind. So also does the list of the four salient virtues approved by the Greeks,—Wisdom, Courage, Temperance, and Justice. But again, these more systematic guides to living do not really defy or

supplant the best traditions of custom or the precepts of the fathers. Rather are they the best of these same customs and precepts, put into more definite form, so that they may be more practically useful.

Custom, then precept, then systematized codes,—three apparently different moral standards; yet, actually, they do not conflict with one another. Each, properly seen, is an interpretation of and a supplementing strength to the other two.

It soon appears, however, that neither the race nor the individual can rest even in such a list of rules, no matter how excellent, as an adequate way to distinguish between right and wrong and to meet all life's moral perplexities. A set of commandments is ever of value, but it is not enough. The founder of Christianity, for instance, did not conceive a list of rules to be a sufficient guide for life, else his own ethical message would have been superfluous. He supplemented the Decalogue by a new commandment, which utterly transfigures it. For a mere set of commandments is much too simple for life's infinite variety. To try to apply it as a sufficient solution of the endless moral problems that confront the earnest soul is, in phrases of Walt Whitman, like sweeping one's orbit with a carpenter's compass, or like measuring the infinite with a yardstick.

A great deal of the moral skepticism of our own day is an encouraging recognition of this very fact.

To many people it seems to mean, further, that there can be no such thing as an absolute standard of morals. But this is not what it needs to mean. All that it really signifies is that one cannot rely upon sets of moral rules taken just by themselves.

What else is needed?

It is noteworthy that a set of rules for moral conduct never explicitly gives a vision of what the *goal* of all moral conduct is, of what is the true end of society and of the individual; and yet it certainly implies such a vision. Thus, when Plato reflects upon the Grecian code of Wisdom, Courage, Temperance, and Justice, he discovers that to make these virtues reasonable they must be related to an ideal toward which they are the means,—the ideal Grecian man and the ideal Grecian state, so eloquently portrayed in the *Republic*. So, I doubt not that if one would understand the Ten Commandments of the Hebrews and would make them efficient, one must have in one's mind the picture of the ideal Hebrew, doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly before his God; for whose moral progress the commandments were essential guideposts on his way. Essential, but not sufficient. Rightly to interpret them, yea, to have the courage to pursue the long, hard journey, the traveler must have a glimpse of the end he seeks through them.

Thus, every significant set of moral rules involves an end to be attained by them; and if we could know this end in the case of any such set of moral com-

mands, they would at once become convincing in terms of the vision out of which they arose in the first place. In the light of this same vision their meaning would be defined, their contradictions solved, and their incompleteness continually rectified. Further, this end would become the true criterion of moral conduct, better capable of adapting itself successfully to the infinite variety of experience. For if one knows the goal of all his striving, the problem of what to do in a given situation is reduced to determining whether this act or that will lead to this goal. It may be difficult enough to decide even then; but the wisdom required is an ever-growing wisdom and need not involve one in hopeless contradictions. Now, finding this end does not do away with sets of rules; it only makes them reasonable, possible of interpretation, and for the first time truly serviceable. Again, we have no superseding of one standard by another, but moral growth; no conflict that need bring skepticism, but moral development that strengthens moral confidence.

It appears, then, that the search for the true moral standard is really a search for the chief end of man and of his social institutions. It is here that we meet with the sort of moral conflict and skepticism that especially characterize our times. There are so many possible ends! We have mentioned some of them. There are those who hold that the end of life is the pleasure of the individual; those who hold

that it is the happiness of the greatest number; those who insist that it is in cultivating rational thought that a man comes to his complete perfection; those who are sure that it is the glorification of the will that we seek; those who erect an end of self-abnegation and self-annulment, with the one affirmative hope of being lost in God; and those who divine that the dream of life should be Beauty. And there are others. How shall we determine amid this maze of dreams which ideal is the right one?

Well, we have made the assertion that all these conflicting ideals imply one another. They do. Their logic insists upon it and history confirms it. See if this is not so. In the previous chapter we have already stressed two conspicuous contradictions in current life; that between hedonism and self-sacrifice on the one hand, and that between society and the individual on the other. It is well to revert to them now and to show how temporary and shallow these contradictions really are when viewed in the light of an all-inclusive moral end.

III

First, the contradiction between the life of pleasure and the life of sacrifice. There is always the Puritan and the Pagan, and to conciliate them is no easy problem. Yet conciliate them we must, and this side the grave, or human nature is hopelessly at war with itself. To conciliate them as does

Romero in the light opera, *The Serenade,* by gratifying the flesh one day and by mortifying it the next, is precisely the absurdity that the spectators of light opera know it to be. Hedonism and sacrifice will always war with one another so long as a narrow and insufficient view of either is assumed as a working basis of life. And this narrow view is the one that has ever been assumed wherever the conflict has occurred.

Thus, the spirit of asceticism in its narrower guise has tried to banish all pleasure from the world and has strangely supposed that there is actual merit in sacrifice for its own sake. The fact that renouncement and sacrifice are characteristic of all religions has helped most to make current this conception. Thus, it has been an approved custom to murder the beauty of this world by making duty seem as unattractive as possible. Merit is supposed to accrue from doing what one does not want to do, just because one does not want to do it; to be happy is probably to be sinful. Macaulay records that to the Puritans "it was a sin to hang garlands on a Maypole, to drink a friend's health, to fly a hawk, to hunt a stag, to play at chess, to wear lovelocks, to put starch into a ruff, to touch the virginals, to read *The Faerie Queene.*"

Likewise, pleasure has been sought as though it were really something one values just because it is pleasant, not because it is pleasure in achievements worth while. Yet, ever standing above mere pleas-

ure is a moral judgment, which assures us that no matter how pleasant, some pleasures are relatively worthless; that our prime pursuit is not pleasure at all, but ideals which, nevertheless, yield the pleasure worthy of a human being, the only pleasure that abides. Indeed, seek pleasure as if it were the only ideal in life and you never achieve it; it eludes you. The saddest and most jaded being on this earth is the professional pleasure-seeker. The life of pleasure, as in the case of Faust, comes upon its own tragic self-defeat. Everybody knows that the psychology of pleasure begets a "hedonistic paradox"; "to get pleasure, one must forget it." And to get it, one must forget it in terms of the adoption of an ideal of self-realization which does no violence to any region of self-development. A life of pleasure-seeking is anomalous and, in its degeneration into selfishness and aimlessness and finally boredom, it is on its logical way to one of two things, the destruction of the seeker, or the abandonment of the search. Thus it is that, historically, hedonistic theories have always developed out of themselves into more adequate views of life, and this according to the measure of their self-consciousness. And hedonistic civilizations have either been destroyed or have grown into civilizations of a larger creed.

Life is a struggle for a moral goal whose every achievement gives pleasure, and yet whose every step means something, too, of the positive pain of sacrifice. The heaven of true pleasure is worth

suffering for, worth even dying for under the exceptional circumstances that life sometimes affords. Martyrdom for its own sake were foolish; but martyrdom for the sake of something better than martyrdom is ever heroic. Indeed, one may well suspect himself if his ideals are not such as to cause constant sacrifice; for the fight for the moral order means heroic choices, and so abnegation; it is verily a fight that brings its glorious wounds. The lives of all we laud as great are filled with renouncements. The meaning of both pleasure and sacrifice emerge only from and are conciliated in the adequate understanding of the moral struggle for the ideal. We then come upon a life which is neither traditional pleasure-seeking nor traditional asceticism; a life in harmony with heroic renouncement and interpretive of its significance. Each without the other contradicts not only the other, but itself. The contradiction is at last solved and each side of the contradiction measurelessly enriched. Our nature is not divided against itself, nor is our civilization. If the Pagan and the Puritan are not happy with each other, they are still more unhappy without each other. In terms of the Joyous Sacrifice it is that they are redefined within us and given not only one body, but one soul. The Pagan gives the Puritan the art treasures of the world; the love of nature; music; joy of living; health of body and mind. The Puritan gives the Pagan the moral inspiration; the far ideal. The Puritan is the thorny stem, the Pagan

the rose and the perfume of the rose. The Puritan is the solemn forest, the Pagan the birds of song and the sunshine through the trees. Standing resolutely for this new and rational fullness of life, the moral order is no longer joyless, nor is its heaven a heaven of such soft bliss as heroes spurn. It solves the warfare between hedonism and asceticism and merges them in a new faith in a life where each finds its transfigured place.

IV

So with the acute contradiction now current between those who hold that the moral goal has to do ultimately with the individual and those who hold that it has to do rather with society. It is solved by recognizing that, as in the case of hedonism and sacrifice, each involves the other in a larger ideal than either is by itself. There will be no solution of this current conflict so long as we suppose society to be one thing and the individual quite another. Once one separates these two, one never can get them together again. The individual is nothing by himself, and society is nothing by itself. The goal of human progress is not society in the abstract at the expense of the individual, for such an abstraction simply does not exist, save as an abstraction. A society that annuls the individuals that make it possible annuls itself, as history well attests. Nor is the goal of progress the self-realization of each

individual at the expense of and abstracted from society; for neither does there exist such an abstracted individual. A rational moral order announces that the end of human endeavor is neither the individual nor society, for the simple reason that it is both. It means the realization of the individual through society and of society through the individual; the welfare of neither can be sundered from that of the other. Such a moral order proclaims that personality is first of all a social conception. And since men are inalienably social, their social rights are not artificial, but are themselves inalienable, as are their social obligations. Where do I end? With my own consciousness, apart from the being of others? But this is a psychological absurdity. For my consciousness of myself is my consciousness of a self in terms of others; take away from me my relatives, my friends, my community, my state, my nation, with all that these mean, and what sort of self have I left? My consciousness is social. But, objects some one, while it is true that I am social, I care for society only as it brings me returns; so that I am only a selfish individualist after all, and I may as well acknowledge it. When I give aid to the mendicant, I do it not because I have any primary social impulse, but because it gives me a selfish thrill of satisfaction. I rejoin, if you have no direct interest in your mendicant for his own sake, why do you find any pleasure in helping him? If you had no such direct interest, it

would never give you pleasure to see him benefited. If you are selfish, it is in the sense of having a natural and direct regard for a larger self that includes your fellow men, as well as that regard for the narrower, abstracted self of the individualist, which, when exclusive, is the common meaning of selfishness in the opprobrious sense.

Thus, rightly seen, the individual is an expression of the social whole, and the social whole is part of the ideal of each individual. For the individual is what he is only as inclusive of all, in his aim, in his life. And every other individual is equally inclusive. Society is an interinclusion of individuals, each of whom reflects society's total reality in himself. The moral law is as Kipling's Law of the Jungle:

> As the Creeper that circles the tree-trunk, so the law runneth forward and back;
> For the strength of the Pack is the Wolf, and the strength of the Wolf is the Pack.

The "self-dependence" of Matthew Arnold's famous poem of that title, if taken literally, contradicts every moral instinct. Such a self-dependence is downright, unreflecting, and self-refuting selfishness. Those aware of the true nature of the moral ideal cannot desire to be, like the stars,

> Bounded by themselves, and unobservant
> In what state God's other works may be.

True, we of the Occident have always boasted of our

independence. It has been the slogan of democracy. But whatever this independence may have meant once, we now know well enough that it cannot mean the self-sufficiency of the individual or group. Only recently have the masses of men become highly aware of their dependence upon the social system for all that makes their lives worth while. What was a fact before the World War has now become conscious; namely, that the fortunes of the world have become so unified that what happens in Cathay is no longer a matter of indifference to Europe,—not even to America; and that one can no longer choose between the cycles of the former and the years of the latter. The commercial interests of the earth are bound together in a bewildering nexus of relations, and the division of labor has made the individual's right to life merely a right to ask it from his fellows, and the right to insure it by proving his indispensability to them. Our dearest pleasures are socialized; they depend upon social expedients of clubs and the theaters and art galleries and organized sports. The intellectual worker no longer immures himself from the world in his upper chamber. The scientist of America coöperates with his colleague of the Continent; and nearly every modern scientific achievement is a joint product. The individual shuts the door to the best means of modern culture the moment he denies the social institution of education; and his religious aspirations, much more his religious deeds, call for the

stimulation and confirmation of other seekers after the power that makes for righteousness. The independence of the prophet in the wilderness was heroic once; but it is an anachronism now, and is no longer even heroic.

Although the growing consciousness of this social dependence accentuates the individual's feeling of helplessness and often aggravates his social rebellion, all the more modern struggles for independence, so far as they have succeeded, have been struggles of the individual not to free himself from men, but to get his rational desires in terms of a vital relation to the sort of society that will guarantee them to each and all. Thus, increased individual liberty, paradoxically enough, means increased social control. Lately, our own government has assumed social controls unthinkable in the earlier stages of democracy, when they would have been thought of as seriously and fatally interfering with individual rights. For the sake of himself, the individual has initiated more and more social constraints; and the functions of government have been incredibly enlarged, including regulations for the public health, the establishment of employment bureaus, community service, and, in general, a new ideal of centralized and specialized leadership. This social control came into its own during the World War; but it is not merely a temporary matter. It is the beginning of a new expression of the conciliation of individual rights and social obligations.

It is this idea of the human self as fundamentally social by nature, together with a deeper study of the practical implications of it in the remolding of human institutions, that will bring civilization forward to its next stage. In the new Social Individual, fully conscious of his significance, the contradiction between the individual and society is solved, and each side of the contradiction is infinitely enriched. The "great" men and women are to be such Social Individuals. They will violate the social order never, even for "conscience's sake," any more than Socrates, with the integrity of the state at heart, would break the law in order to escape from his prison. Their function it is to ask, as did Socrates, better things, larger things of society than can yet be granted, in order that the individual of the future, through a larger social chance, may grow to the stature of this same greatness. The most far-reaching good that higher education can do for our society is to produce such men and women; men and women who are committed heart and soul to the social task of democracy, and who will dare to become the practical prophets of its progress, the veritable eyes and hands of its hope.

V

But suppose that these illustrative contradictions between pleasure and sacrifice, between society and the individual, are solved. Even then our problem

is only incompletely met. For pleasure, even if it be thoroughly socialized and gained by whatever sacrifice and toil, is not the whole of life. For we live not only a life of feeling, but a life of reason. The Rationalist has his rights, founded just as surely in the aspirations of human nature. But what of that? It is not illogical, is it, to find reason as well as pleasure in life? Why call them conflicting ideals? One may have both. Indeed, one must have both to have either. Irrational pleasure brings pain, and rationality that leads to permanent unhappiness is immediately subject to suspicion. There is no real conflict.

Likewise, we not only reason and feel, but we act; we live in a realm of desires and deeds, summed in what we call "will." And the will can have its rights without excluding reason and feeling. Indeed, it must be a rational will to be effective; and so must it be a pleasurable will, or it will not act at all. And the dream of Beauty can be easily harmonized with these other dreams of the spirit; every ideal calls for life in its beauty as well as for life in its happiness and life in its truth. Nor need conscience lose its value even though it is never enough, taken alone. Conscience itself must ever be educated by all these idealistic factors that make for completeness. Never are its mandates infallible. Always are they helpfully suggestive, and often, in moral crises, if trained to sound judgment, they rise to the emergency with quick and accurate decision.

These are merely hints of what it would require many pages to develop fully. But enough has been said to suggest that what appears to be a hopeless conflict of moral ideals is not so hopeless as it seems and that, with their conciliation, moral skepticism is insufficiently founded. But now the great and final question remains. If no one of these ideals, taken by itself, is the correct one, just what is that moral end which, as we have alleged, includes them all and transcends every one of them? What is that all-embracing moral goal which is the true standard and which ever remains the same amid all moral change?

For the answer to this question, let us look within ourselves. Let us begin with common, everyday things that we all desire and are willing to struggle for. Food is one of the most common of these objects of desire. Why do I seek it as a momentary goal of my efforts? Certainly, the reason is not a capricious one; the desire for food is founded upon my fundamental human needs. I desire also pure air to breathe. Neither is this desire capricious; it, too, is an expression of my needs as a human being with just this human constitution and its demands for the conditions of its existence. Both food and air are among the fundamental desires of the bodily life. There are many other such desires, and they all must be satisfied if life is to continue in the fullness of its possibilities.

Food and air are humble enough ideals; they are

not the ultimate ends of our existence. And yet what is true of them is true of all our ideals, even those supreme ideals that we dignify by the name of moral. Such ideals too, in so far as they are persistent, are born of our fundamental human desires which, in turn, are expressions of our fundamental needs and capacities. "The impulse which stirs the inmost depth of heart is the Real of us seeking expression." Our ideals are our needs objectified. As in the case of the body, so with the mind or spirit; there are many such desires and, therefore, many purposes and ideals. And again, as in the case of the body, if we choose the satisfaction of only one of these desires or of a group of them, the other suppressed desires are forever forcing themselves upon our attention. Suppose one's body should say, "I want food to eat and I also want air to breathe; I will choose the food and suppress the desire for air." The result of such physiological idiocy would be death. The result of such moral folly among the ideals of the spirit is death also,—moral death, or a stultified narrowing of moral life.

Fortunately such moral narrowness is never permanently satisfactory to any of us. *For the one fundamental desire of every human being is that every one of the persistent desires of the spirit be fulfilled, so far as this is possible.* So the really fundamental ideal of every human being—that which he ever unconsciously seeks—is that large and complete ideal which will conciliate the greatest

number of such ideals as are only partial expressions of his spirit's needs. It is hard to give a name not misleading to this all-inclusive end of human search. The naming of it is not the main thing. It might be called Total Self-realization. But whatever it is called, it will include all the conflicting moral ideals that we have so far passed in review. The supreme office of reason is to harmonize and adjust them.

But some one may object, why pay any attention to our desires at all, as if they had a right to dictate what our moral concerns shall be? Has it not been one of the high traditions of the moral life that often one must act not in accordance with one's desires, but in a noble defiance of them? Is not our duty most frequently the performance of precisely what we do not desire to do?

The wholly adequate answer is that we simply must pay moral attention to our fundamental desires, not only because they are the expressions of our permanent needs, but because we cannot rid ourselves of them even if we would. This is the basic fact of our human consciousness. Indeed, one would not find it difficult to argue that the entire evolution of mind proceeds through the persistent urge of its inalienable desires. One cannot rid himself of such desires; nor can he successfully enslave them, as some moralists have tried to do. Why, we cannot even fight our desires unless we first have a desire to do so! We cannot seek an end that

some desire does not dictate, even if it is the desire to have no desires at all. True, duty often appears to be the doing of what we do not desire to do; but this is only because the desire to do our duty is in conflict with other desires that momentarily fight back. No human being would have the least power to do his duty if he actually did not desire to do it, all things considered; if, indeed, he did not desire it so strongly as to overcome all desires to the contrary!

No, our human nature will not rest in any moral purpose that is not large enough to give some hope to every one of our human needs. A total self demands nothing less than total self-realization. Sensible moral discipline is not the annulling of any of our really fundamental wants, but the subordinating of them to their rightful place in the moral economy.

VI

The objection may be raised that such a moral goal is so far but vaguely defined. But suppose the truth happens to be that the ideal self and the ideal society that we seek simply cannot be defined in its fullness? That it can be drawn only in bold outlines? Suppose that the most illuminating moral truth of all is that a serious aspect of our growth toward the ideal is the ever-increasing knowledge of the ideal itself? This is, indeed, the fact. Our

moral deeds toward the goal of progress include the slow achievement of increasingly definite thoughts concerning it. If our knowledge is at no time complete, still, as Locke once put it, the light of our candle is enough for the next step; and the next step carries our candle forward, making possible still further vision. Such partial definiteness as we possess at any given stage of the journey presents no warrant for moral skepticism, but only for moral caution. The ultimate thing is certain enough. The all-embracing end of moral struggle is no mere guess. Its application as a moral criterion is not easy; but the moral struggle has never been and never will be easy. This is why one of the indispensable moral virtues is courage.

Furthermore, the difficulty about the vagueness of moral ideals is more theoretical than practical. For if each of our fundamental ideals really implies all the rest, one may seek any one of them loyally and rationally and be assured that he will find himself gradually embracing them all in his growth. Which one any given person shall lay emphasis upon at first depends largely upon his temperament and his stage of advancement. Some had better start with the search for happiness; some with the search for beauty; there is a place in every developing life where these roads converge in the broad highway that leads not to destruction. But in the nature of the case, some of our partial ideals guarantee the complete goal more directly and certainly than do

others. For instance, the standard of custom is low in the scale; any reflective standard is higher, since the central problem of moral progress happens to be the careful and reflective adjustment of our desires rather than the blind gropings of unreflective habit.

The large moral ideal that I have been suggesting as the solution of the present conflict of ideals is in keeping with the spirit of the age, in spite of its moral doubt. It is in harmony with the current praise of the Rounded Man. It reflects the modern emphasis upon the abundant life which Spencer, stimulated by a vision of an ever-widening evolution, characterizes as life's "breadth," and which Tennyson celebrates when he exclaims,

> 'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,
> Oh life, not death, for which we pant;
> More life, and fuller, that I want.

This ideal gives a new meaning to our faith in the triumph of righteousness, since, with it, all history can be readily conceived as contributing to a goal so all-embracing that it can find ultimate use for every valiant search of men and civilizations, even though they were unaware of the fuller vision their heroism created for those who came after.

The reasons for the permanence of moral skepticism have been shown to be faulty. The true ideal that conciliates all ideals has been suggested. But one must do more than this to establish a moral

confidence in it that will solve the great problems of our day, and solve them abidingly. This moral confidence our age lacks and needs. If we had it, progress would be more secure and ethical reconstruction more certain. If we had it, even if we chose a merely partial ideal, we would at least follow it seriously, so that it would expand of itself out of its relative poverty into the fullness of life. But the trouble with our age is not so much that it has a wrong moral ideal, as that men have no absolute confidence in any moral ideal at all!

Now, the conditions of such a moral confidence are not simple. They cannot be created by mere sentimental exhortations. The leaders of men must know what these conditions are, and that speedily, if our greater problems are to be solved. To understand them will be to clarify still further the way of life to which we have just been led by logic and by history.

CHAPTER III

THE CONDITIONS OF MORAL CONFIDENCE

Most of the individuals we acclaim as great and most outstanding civilizations have been characterized by what we may call moral confidence. The golden age of Greece built its glory with it; the Reformation was on fire with it; the French Revolution valiantly transformed a social order by it; the American people created a new democracy upon it. It has been the one common attribute of vastly diverse personalities, separated by time and differing widely in genius, such as Socrates, Dante, Jeanne d'Arc, Lincoln, Foch. It is the fundamental virtue of contemporary men of action who rise significantly above their fellows. This moral confidence is a confidence that there is a veritable distinction between what is right and what is wrong, that one knows what this distinction is, and that by no possible accident may one's fealty to the right be ultimately betrayed by failure or by disproof. Such moral confidence begets sacrifice, even to much suffering. Such men as possess it have causes which they are not only willing to live for, but to die for. There can be no greater confidence than this.

It is perfectly true that the moral confidence of

this or that man may be mistaken. That is not the point. I am not now referring to any given man's faith in his particular moral creed and evaluating just that. I am speaking of moral confidence in the broad sense of unswerving loyalty to some moral ideal or other, whether or not it be the ideal finally justified by all men. Moral confidence may or may not be misplaced; but moral confidence in something is absolutely essential to any man and to any civilization, if persistently courageous deeds are to be done.

The indispensable conditions of moral confidence are surprisingly analogous to the conditions of political confidence, or of business confidence. The political confidence of citizens rests upon certain convictions,—convictions concerning the fundamental nature and tendencies of their state. Business confidence, too, depends upon certain underlying convictions or beliefs; as, for instance, beliefs in the honesty and credit of one's business associates, the stability of economic institutions, the state of the market, and the conditions of supply and demand. Just so, moral confidence is not a gratuitous thing; it, too, rests upon certain beliefs,—beliefs about the nature of the life and experience in which our moral deeds are cast. Just as in business, so in morals, we may not be fully conscious of these underlying beliefs; but we have them if ours is a significant moral faith.

The easiest way to see the importance of certain

beliefs, concerning which we think little and yet which are ever with us, is to imagine them suddenly absent, or to imagine ourselves believing something exactly contradictory to them. Suppose, for instance, that we were convinced that life is of such a nature that what we call wrong will certainly triumph in the long run. Suppose that we really believed that all efforts on our part to prevent this catastrophe were futile, all our serious strivings for righteousness subject to sure defeat, all our sacrifices for it utterly in vain. If we were surely convinced of this, how many of us would continue the moral struggle? How many of us would die for a cause for which there is no hope of victory? We are not very fond of doing useless deeds, especially if they involve effort and suffering. And moral struggle ever involves just these things. If moral hope were once thoroughly and finally believed to be "a phantom spirit, throwing up wild hands," all moral confidence would be forever dead.

The first condition of moral confidence, then, is the conviction that the universe is, at bottom, a moral order; that is, an order in which righteousness will certainly triumph, or at any rate has a chance to triumph. Yet, this faith is not certainly proved by our ordinary observations of the mere facts of life as we know it. Sometimes it seems just the other way; "right forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne." The question whether the world is growing better is an endless question,

always with inconclusive evidence so far as the mere facts are concerned, which will appeal as convincing according to one's temperament and experience. One cannot base great moral confidence upon the few passing events of life that we now see, any more than could the afflicted Job. Such confidence must reach down to the belief that, whatever appearances may be, the very nature of our universe is such that it makes the triumph of righteousness in it a natural thing.

Such a universe is different from any other kind of universe, and involves a very definite structure; although few are likely to reflect thoroughly upon just what it does involve. To say that the universe is a moral order is to say so many other things! It is to say that its manifold changes are not only according to law, but that this law is moral, whatever else it is besides. For instance, it is to imply that evolution is not only a change from certain types of organism to certain other types, as from structure and function relatively simple to those relatively complex, but that it is really, in the long run, a development from worse life to better life; that, in the long run, the survival of the fittest means also the survival of the best, although science may not legitimately commit itself to such a statement, while never denying it. To have confidence that the universe is of such a nature that righteousness will triumph is to know that it has a goal of a very definite sort, even though it forever recedes in the

distance, and that this goal cannot be conceived as imperfect or defective. If it were defective, of course it would not be wholly good; and yet we are to believe in the *utter* triumph of the good if our moral confidence is to be sure; and it must be sure. To say that a moral goal is defective is another way of saying that it must be supplanted by a better one. The moral ideal can never be thought of as short of perfection. Even though no finite individuals or societies may ever actually attain it, it is the "far-off divine event" toward which they struggle, and which becomes the ultimate standard of their progress. This absolute goal, this perfect self of men and societies is sometimes, and in many guises, included in the idea of God.

So, also, confidence in the moral order is likely to imply an interpretation of death that deprives it of its power to defeat the continuous attainment of the individual, that is, if it be an endless goal toward which the moral mandate urges him. This interpretation of death becomes a confidence in immortality.

Further, belief in the moral order means that one has the chance to choose the right rather than the wrong; that in some sense or other one is responsible for his choice, that one is not "fated," but free, a master of his own fate.

This is why in all ages confidence in the moral order has carried with it some beliefs favorable or unfavorable, but nevertheless decisive, concern-

ing God, Immortality, and Freedom. Whatever the verities in which moral confidence was based, when faith in them declined, moral confidence declined. It is the custom to call faith concerning these matters "religion," especially if they are affirmative, although they are subjects of purely rational research as well. At any rate, in so far as religion gives men a belief in a moral order of some sort, and a faith in the verities necessary for a moral order, religion is a help to morals.

And here we come to an all-important fact. In examining our age we find it to be not only an age of moral skepticism, but of religious skepticism as well. Now, as moral and religious confidence are necessary to one another, so do moral and religious doubt reënforce one another, so that our age turns out to be not only an age of moral skepticism, but an age in which the indispensable religious conditions of such a moral confidence as would displace doubt do not surely exist!

The greatest truth for any ethical reconstruction at this time is this: Since moral confidence cannot be restored without a confidence in whatever verities make it possible, we need a new grounding of these verities that will appeal to the critical intelligence of our own day. Uncritical revelation, false or true, will no longer suffice. We might go straightway to religion, but religion is just now in grievous need of this same confidence, although the World War wondrously revived a longing for its truths.

So now, surely, is the crucial time for a new and rational discussion of what are to be our fundamental beliefs so far as they are necessary for moral faith, and especially as they are affected by science, the great intellectual enterprise of our time that seems to put most stumbling-blocks in our way.

But since such a discussion will inevitably remain so intimately related to what we term religion, it is advisable first to attempt a better view of what religion is, scrutinized logically and related to two other immemorial ways in which men have sought for truth.

CHAPTER IV

THE PHILOSOPHER, THE POET, AND THE PROPHET

Moral confidence implies a world-view, a conviction concerning what life is in its reality, contrasted with what it appears to be; some interpretation of what the world is, not in its fragments, but in its wholeness. Now, all advanced civilizations have offered men three different ways to a world-view. The way of the Philosopher is one; the way of the Poet is another; and the way of the Prophet is a third,—and by this last I mean the way of religion. I have already spoken of this as the most common way, but now I wish to define it further; and I know not how to do it better than to compare the way of the Prophet of religious verities with that of his fellow seekers after the reality of things, the Philosopher on the one hand, and the Poet on the other.

That poetry, philosophy, and religion possess some fundamentally common interests is suggested by their close interrelation in every age when they have flourished at all. Ever does the great Poet tend to become also the Philosopher, with a distinct philosophic view of things as the major motive of his singing. There was Dante, in whom is found one of the richest expressions of the philosophy of the

medieval era. There was Goethe, whose poetry is at the last a bold view of life, one aspect of which finds glorification in the tragedy and triumph of the spirit of Faust. For us of the English tradition, there is Shakespeare, with a quite definite notion of a moral order, which becomes a key to comic climax and to tragic doom. There is Wordsworth, with his love of nature transfigured in the name of God, Plato, and sundry theologians. There is Tennyson, whose reflective poetry, most conspicuously *In Memoriam,* is the philosophic defiance of an age that finds its dearest faiths assailed successfully by the pitiless onward march of science. There is Browning, through whose kaleidoscope of dramatic patterns is to be seen a pattern common to all, a pattern of a universe in which the problem of evil is solved at last; a pattern detailed in myriad ways, from *Rabbi Ben Ezra* to *Abt Vogler;* from *Pippa Passes* to *Prospice.*

Just as the great Poet tends to be also a Philosopher, so does the great Philosopher tend to be a Poet. There was Parmenides, whose changeless One found lips to sing his world-view in a poem, *On Nature.* There was Lucretius, who longed for that

> Passionless bride, divine Tranquillity,
> Yearn'd after by the wisest of the wise.

Whose Epicureanism spoke rhythmically for both Poet and Philosopher evermore. Above all, there was Plato, with no rhymes, indeed, and none of the rigid conventions of the Poet's craft, who, neverthe-

less, is one of the greatest poets of the spirit that ever spun the texture of ultimate dreams.

And, further, both philosophic vision and poetic song tend to merge with religion, which ever yearns to express its highest moods in poetry; and which is also so closely related to philosophy that it is often hard to say where religion ends and philosophy begins. Are the musings of the Oriental sages in the Zend-Avestas, the Vedas, and the Upanishads philosophy, or are they religion? A mystic like Meister Eckhart,—is he Philosopher or is he Prophet? Or, read America's greatest Philosopher, Royce; when with him you have found the Absolute, who suffers with us, atones with us, and in whose eternal completeness our fragmentary selves triumph, have you found mere philosophic conviction, or is it not also an illuminated faith which partakes of the devotion of religion? The aspiration of the Philosopher and the prayer of the Prophet,—do they not touch wings?

The Philosopher, the Poet, and the Prophet! They are spiritually so akin that it is difficult to speak the message of one of them greatly without voicing the message of the other two. Why? Because, in a measure, all three have the same aim,—the discovery of the world as it really is, as compared with what it appears to be; the search for that very reality that we said any moral confidence involves! All three seek the larger truth beneath those illusions which even common sense accepts, but on which no moral faith can be based. Is the prob-

lem that of death? Well, ask all three what is the reality about death, rather than its mere appearance. Poet, Philosopher, and Prophet alike know that

> We see but dimly through the mists and vapors;
> Amid these earthly damps,
> What seem to us but sad, funereal tapers
> May be heaven's distant lamps.

Yes, it is the common attribute of all three to look deeper than does the casual observer of life. The oar in the water appears bent; the reality is quite another thing. So, in the abstruser matters of life and mind, we must go below the surface of things, seeing them not in their fragmentariness, but in their totality, as parts of a rational whole. Poet, Philosopher, and Prophet alike suspect it may be that

> All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
> All chance, direction, which thou canst not see;
> All discord, harmony not understood;
> All partial evil, universal good.

It is this view of life in its completeness that the Poet, Philosopher, and Prophet all seek together, each in his own way; and in so far as they find it, they serve morals by revealing, through some world-view, the conditions of such moral confidence as may render an age heroic. Civilizations have won supreme victories through the strength they gave.

But while Philosopher, Poet, and Prophet agree in

this one subject of their search, they do not all agree in their ways of attaining it. Their aims are alike, but their methods are different. Here it is that the Poet and the Prophet part company from the Philosopher. The two former seek reality through what we call insight, intuition, inspiration, the divine afflatus. The Prophet's eye, as well as the Poet's,

> in a fine frenzy rolling,
> Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven.

Not so with the Philosopher. He seeks reality by a far different means,—through the cold, technical processes of logic; through reason rather than through intuition; through provable and defensible demonstration rather than through inspiration. So it is, too, that the Philosopher's legitimate mode of expression differs from that of both the Poet and the Prophet. The Philosopher expounds reality in terms of abstract concepts, carefully made over into a logical system, often bristling with forbidding technical phrases for the sake of extreme rational exactness. The Poet and the Prophet, on the other hand, agree in expressing their views of reality through concrete images, rather than through abstract conceptions; they speak eloquently through sensuous symbols; they entice not only the mind, but the heart. "Simple, sensuous, and passionate" are both Poet and Prophet. They suggest rather than argue, reveal rather than expound, speaking not through philosophy's reason, but through

> August anticipations, symbols, types
> Of a dim splendor ever on before
> In that eternal circle life pursues.

For instance, the Philosopher communicates his Absolute, which includes all time and space, through a speech filled with the arid terms that abstract reason often involves; the Poet and the Prophet, however, finding little help in logic, return from their immediate vision and tell it in metaphor, with a rhapsody still in their souls such as Henry Vaughn utters:

> I saw eternity the other night
> Like a great Ring of pure and endless light,
> All calm, as it was bright;
> And round beneath it, Time in hours, days, years,
> Driv'n by the spheres
> Like a vast shadow mov'd, in which the world
> And all her train were hurl'd.

It is through presumably demonstrable proofs ontological, teleological or otherwise that the Philosopher gives us God; but Wordsworth, caring little for such so-called proofs, but fresh from his solitary musings on nature, tells of God not in reasons, but in the symbols of sea and sun and sky:

> And I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;

A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

Or, if he announces the moral law ruling all the events of the universe, he does it through no syllogism; but, addressing a Duty personalized, he exclaims in inspired imagery, unknown to logic's rigid speech,

Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,
And fragrance on thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the Stars from wrong;
And the most ancient Heavens, through Thee, are fresh and strong.

Or, again, the Poet and Prophet alike pass by the Philosopher's abstract proofs that life is not a plaything of chance, and in concrete images and symbols prefer to proclaim their faith

That life is not as idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot with burning fears,
And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
And batter'd with the shocks of doom

To shape and use.

Is it any wonder that the Poet and the Prophet have been genial comrades on the long road that leads to Reality? The Poet has written the hymns of the Prophet; and the Prophet has given the Poet his visions for song. How many times have both

lived together in the same body and spoken with the same lips!

Alike as are the Poet and the Prophet in aim, in method, and in language too, they differ both from one another and from the Philosopher in their underlying motives. For the supreme motive of the Poet, as of all those who are artists, is to see life in its Beauty; the motive of the Philosopher is to see life in its Reason; the motive of the Prophet is to see life in its Goodness, whose ultimate name is Holiness. Each seeks reality indeed, but each cares for his own special side of it. Beauty for its own sake; Reason for its own sake; Goodness for its own sake; each a significant part of the whole of Truth. Yet each involves the other two and completes them. The Poet seeks Beauty for its own sake, yet it must be Beauty that is also rational and good. The Philosopher seeks Reason for its own sake; yet even Reason, if it be true, shall not sin against Goodness and Beauty. The Prophet seeks Goodness for its own sake; Beauty too, in the art of its cathedrals, of its painting, of its sculpture, of its music; but it must be the Beauty of Holiness. Nor may he leave out Reason; only it is Reason in the service of salvation to the Good.

But now comes a critical question pertinent to our quest for a basis of moral confidence. If the Poet, the Prophet, and the Philosopher each give us a total view of reality so necessary as the condition of moral faith, which of these three versions shall we choose?

Well, it makes very little difference, does it, if each, completely carried out, involves the other two? Have a sure faith in the triumph of Beauty or of Reason or of Goodness, and a moral order and a heroic moral confidence is assured. The morally valiant of history have been about equally divided between its Philosophers, its Prophets, and its Poets. There was Socrates; there was Paul; there was Dante. Each learned by moral heroism that

Knowledge by suffering entereth.

Yet there is this to be said, that the conspicuous motive of religion is nearer the moral quest than that of poetry or of philosophy; for the conspicuous motive of religion coincides with the moral motive of Goodness. Thus it is that religion is always the most natural support for moral confidence; thus it is that religion is the most common way men have had to attain a world-view that means faith in moral order.

At any rate, this is true: one must have something of the Poet or the Philosopher or the Prophet in him to have any moral confidence at all. And now comes into view the acutely significant thing for our age; it is an age in which all three of these historic roads to reality are surprisingly neglected. So, that our age should be one of moral skepticism is not an anomaly; it is a natural and inevitable correlative of the decline of poetry, philosophy, and religion. True, there is now a revival of poetry through the

stimulation of the World War, which led men to face more frankly and seriously some of the fundamental realities of life and death. Yet, in general, the Poet is not popular, nor is he regarded very seriously, nor is his message very coherent. The poetry of the past is neglected by even educated men, who tend to think of the Poets, as of all mere artists, as belonging to the luxuries of the spirit. Not many leisure hours of even the man of culture are spent in reading poetry. Philosophy, too, is under suspicion as being a matter of sheer speculation and dream rather than a valuable and necessary instrument of moral and intellectual progress. Who reads Plato, or Kant, or Royce, save as infrequent parts of college curricula leading to degrees? As for religion, the crisis of the war indeed unveiled its concerns for a more serious consideration than many decades have known; but even yet religion is suspected by multitudes of men as being a mass of outgrown superstitions and credulous faiths, very useful indeed for women and children, but of little vital concern to the modern man vigorously grounded in the methods and achievements of an age of reason.

That is the point. The man of to-day knows that he belongs to an age of reason. And, scrutinized even superficially, it is easy to see that this reason in which he has put his robust faith and through which his boasted progress has taken place is the reason of natural science, not the reason of philosophy, or of poetry, or of religion. Natural science has

taken the place of these things. As we have already intimated, the age belongs not to the Poet, or to the Philosopher, or to the Prophet, but to the Scientist! To him we owe all that is most conspicuously characteristic of our civilization; our industrial progress, our new means of intercommunication, making the whole world one, our transit over the earth and through the air, our medicine and surgery, preventive and curative, our visions of a reconstructed civilization. Moral confidence may have waned; moral faith may have turned to doubt; but there is one faith we have not lost amid the wreck of things, —our faith in modern science.

Herein lies a hope. Perhaps in this very science we shall yet be able to find some secure basis for a moral order; some foundation for that moral confidence so much needed to solve the problems of our times.

We must now look at science very frankly and find out.

CHAPTER V

MODERN SCIENCE AND THE GREAT VERITIES

THE manner in which the professional scientist regards science and the manner in which the average man regards science are two very different things. Altogether, the average man has a much larger faith in what science can do than has the scientist himself, proverbially cautious as he is.

The contemporary man of culture is likely to have one of two quite confident impressions; either that science is entirely capable of giving us a tolerably complete view of the world as it really is in its wholeness; or that science discourages the possibility of such an ambitious project as being beyond our finite reason. These two views about science are astonishingly divergent, and one wonders how such contrary notions about so well known an enterprise as science can flourish at the same time. But they do. As a matter of fact, neither view is the true one; and neither view is sanctioned by those cautious professional scientists that are fully self-conscious concerning science's aims and methods. Yet, since both views are widely current and have so important

a bearing upon the moral interpretation and progress of our civilization, let us examine them to see what measure of truth they contain.

I

It is a widespread notion, encouraged by a few conspicuous scientists themselves, that science is amply capable of disposing of such questions of ultimate reality as the existence and nature of the moral ideal, of the soul, of God, of freedom, and of immortality,—all questions that must be met in one way or another before one may have a coherent world-view. For this is an age of reason; and reason means science; and science can tell us all there is to be known about the universe as it really is, as well as about life's true end; and it can devise the means of efficiently realizing this end. That greatest generalization of modern science, evolution, has helped men to gain this impression. Evolution explains so much that it is taken by many to explain more than it does. It is enlarged beyond the bounds of biology and is made into a law for inorganic matter, and even for mind; so that we have books on cosmic evolution, as well as on the evolution of minds and of civilizations. Conspicuous instances of men who have helped to make such notions current are Herbert Spencer and his popularizers, and Ernst Haeckel. A multitude of other writers, fascinated by the larger generalizations of science and not

too careful of exactness, have aided in intrenching this tradition.

For such as share this view of the capabilities of science, the results are likely to seem certain enough, even though largely negative of cherished beliefs uncritically current before natural science made its modern advent. The old faiths perish, both moral and religious. For the universe we typically gain is a universe where a moral ideal is either absent altogether, displaced by a necessity that knows only laws of causation, never ideals to be achieved; or the moral end of man is thought of as adjustment to his environment, or to an environment toward which the past seems to show we are steadily tending. In this case, the moral ideal becomes identical with the goal of evolution; and this of course can be known only very uncertainly, or approximately, if it can be known at all. As for God, the general impression is that science has "little use for that hypothesis"; or, God is translated into a conception of the sum total of universal Force, or Energy; or, He is frankly Unknowable,—which amounts to saying what a great agnostic has said: "What we know is science; what we don't know is God." As for the soul, if one means by such an entity something distinct from the body in any sense, science finds no such reality; at best, it is an abstract generalization gathered only from our passing mental states; the particular mental state of the moment exists, but no such thing as a Mind or Soul that includes all our

mental states, any more than there is such a thing as a Horse that includes all horses. As for freedom, all that science knows tends to disprove it, in the sense that we have an equal power to do one thing rather than another at any given moment. One has no power of choice in that sense; one cannot escape from the universal necessity of causal law; each is the product of heredity and environment. Could we know any individual thoroughly, together with all the conditions surrounding him, we could predict his future acts as certainly as we can predict a chemical reaction or an eclipse of the sun. If we seem to ourselves at the moment of choice to be free, this is only one of our many illusions. Further reflection corrects this deceptive impression and convinces us that all that we think and do is determined by our preceding thoughts and deeds, and by the circumstances in which we find ourselves. As for immortality,—nothing in nature lasts forever, except, possibly, the sum total of nature itself, together with its immutable laws. The individual thing ever passes away, whether it be a sea, a mountain, a tree, or a man. We have no guarantee of immortality, even of the race. Ask nature of the fate of all her genera and species and her answer is sure and exceedingly merciless:

> "So careful of the type?" But no.
> From scarped cliff and quarried stone
> She cries, "A thousand types are gone:
> I care for nothing, all shall go."

Such is the world-picture science is commonly supposed to draw for us. Face it frankly. At its best, a moral goal of physical health; a life ending at death; all deeds determined by the inflexible law of cause and effect; and a God that is the universal Energy or the Unknowable. In his *Atalanta in Calydon,* the poet Swinburne, himself a curious blending of the classic and the ultramodern, pictures in eloquent metaphor and without intention the modern man as natural science leaves him. Of course, Swinburne does this, not as a scientist, but with his own poet's strong reaction of satirical pathos. Man is a paradox of bounteous dream and brutal fact, of high hope which stern reality denies. He is made of

> a measure of sliding sand
> From under the feet of the years;

his reason, a "remembrance fallen from heaven" is limited by his irrationality, his "madness risen from hell"; his will to choose and to do is a "strength without hands to smite"; his love is not an ideal, endless thing,—it "endures for a breath"; and the grave ends his toiling that "shall not reap," for, while "in his heart is a blind desire," there is "in his eyes foreknowledge of death." So that, at last,

> His life is a watch or a vision
> Between a sleep and a sleep.

Those who follow such a world-view as science is thought to give us would rightly say that one need

not weave the thread of mockery into the texture of truth as Swinburne has done. One may, instead, face the facts cheerfully and sensibly. If we do not like the facts, it is no great matter. For, it may be said, the truth is what we desire, even though it destroy some cherished hopes of poets and dreamers. The true man is loyal to the truth, wherever it leads. If one wants moral valor, here is the highest moral valor of all. It is such frank courage on the part of its scientific leaders that has made our modern civilization great in a distinct and unprecedented way.

The trouble is that *such a world-view requires a moral valor that it cannot give.* One cannot long be courageously loyal through toil and suffering merely for the sake of being courageous; it must be for the sake of something that inspires courage. A cause whose very nature does not inspire courage is desperately in need of the one thing that it can never get.

Yet elaborate systems of ethics have been reared of late upon the foundations that science is supposed to give; usually, it must be remarked, not by professional scientists themselves, but by those who carry the generalizations of science much farther than the scientific specialist is willing to do. There are many attempts at an "ethics of evolution." Such attempts seem to signify that, after all, science does give us a universe whose moral order is sufficient for a complete ethical system. But examine these

systems carefully, try to merge your life with them, and you discover two things. You discover, first, that there have been utterly omitted from these new interpretations of moral values most of the things that the highly praised men and civilizations of the past have cherished, fought for, been willing to die for. This is no final objection to any system of moral values, although it does encourage further scrutiny of such a system. Would Socrates have drunk the hemlock with fortitude for the laws of health? Can the ideals of Plato reduce themselves to rules for adjustment to environment? Would Giordano Bruno be burned at the stake for the sake of "normal functioning"? Did Leonardo da Vinci paint for the sake of the "equilibrium of universal forces"? Is there a single law of evolution that an army would fight for? In the great historic conflicts of ideals, the struggle for mere bodily existence has been sacrificed in the resolute pursuit of the things that have been regarded higher still. Have we really ceased to care for these things? More important still, can we cease to care for them? Did it ever strike the modern who has attempted to insure his moral valor by mere scientific laws of health that he is caught between the horns of a pitiless dilemma? If he cannot rid himself of moral ideals beyond mere bodily health of self or race, then the ideal of health will not suffice to enlist his moral courage; but if, on the other hand, he can accept the laws of health as the ultimate moral values, he has adopted an ideal that

never did and never can by itself alone enlist moral courage. In either case, the moral confidence that breeds heroism is at low ebb. And the moral crises in life require moral heroism over and over again, or they spell moral defeat.

Looking at such an ethics at its best, one is inspired with a moral confidence of about the grade of that revealed by the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyám, which resolves itself to the skeptical query, "What's the use?" It ends with the turning down of an empty glass. Even Omar was dissatisfied with his own sterile universe, and exclaims, as the reflective modern is likely to exclaim in the presence of the moral order as some suppose science to interpret it,

> Ah love, could you and I with Him conspire
> To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire,
> Would we not shatter it to bits and then
> Remould it nearer to the heart's desire!

Those convinced that the moral order given by science is the true order may well answer: "It makes little difference whether it appears to Omar or to you as 'a sorry scheme.' The universe is not as we make it or wish it, but as we find it. We ourselves may not be satisfied with it any more than are you, although, after all, it is foolish to be dissatisfied with truth. At any rate, we do one thing you don't see that you must do,—we at least are loyal to the facts as science finds them; and we build whatever morals we can upon these facts."

II

We certainly must be loyal to the facts as science finds them; but what facts does science find? I want to show now that science finds no facts at all that justify any world-view whatever, any moral order of any description; that the very nature of scientific aim and method renders it impossible for science to deal with any of those ultimate questions that we have been considering; that, truly seen, science gives us absolutely no basis for either moral confidence or moral skepticism; and that the cautious modern scientist himself is thoroughly in accord with this view of his subject; and that those who have assumed the moral interpretation of science have gone far beyond any results that the great body of professional scientists would approve.

Many of our mistaken notions about what science says or does not say come from speaking as if there were such a thing as science in general; when all that we can legitimately mean by science is the particular sciences. For what is this science that is supposed to say so much? It is the score or more of particular sciences, such as the science of astronomy, the science of geology, of physics, of chemistry, of biology. Or, if you include not only the natural sciences, but what are called the mental and social sciences, you may add such subjects as psychology, economics, sociology, and history. A given scientist is ever a specialist in some one of

these subjects of scientific regard. I do not deny that there are some matters common to all the sciences, matters which I shall yet discuss. But just at present it is essential to observe that when one asks what science has to say on any subject, he is really asking what some one of the particular sciences has to say on that subject.

We have just been reviewing what sort of world-view science is said to give us,—what is its verdict on such questions as the moral ideal, God, Freedom, and Immortality. But now, since science is only a general name for the particular sciences, the real question is what the particular sciences have to say on these matters. Take the natural sciences first. As a matter of fact, has any of them anything at all to say on these great subjects? If so, which one of them is it that gives us any verdict about a moral ideal? Is it chemistry? Physics? Which one concerns itself with the existence and nature of God, or the Soul? Astronomy? Biology? In which sort of scientific laboratory will one find scientists experimenting about Freedom and Immortality? Turning to the mental and social sciences, does even the psychologist have tests for such matters, along with his memory tests and reaction-time tests? Does the scientific economist consider Immortality in his laws of supply and demand? Does the scientific historian give us a history of God, or show the relations of civilizations to His nature and purposes? The truth is that not one text-book of a single modern

science, keeping strictly to its field, pretends to solve such matters. Not only is it a fact that these ultimate questions, whose solution is so necessary to any moral order, are not disposed of by the sciences in the way popularly supposed; but the sciences do not even touch such questions in the least! One might know every law of every one of the special sciences and yet not be one whit wiser concerning any one of the great problems we have been discussing.

Why? Because these problems are not the problems of the sciences in any sense. Then, whence came the popular impression that science actually does solve them? Well, it is the most natural thing in the world to let the assumption creep in that since the sciences do not give any verdict on these matters, they somehow give us the warrant either to deny them outright or to assert that at least we can know nothing about them. Or, one goes beyond the special sciences to the common assumptions that make the sciences possible; as, for instance, the assumption of the law of universal causation or the persistence of force; and from such larger generalizations one pretends to construct a moral order of some kind. It is again worthy of remark that it is not the great body of scientific specialists themselves who do such things; it is those who take it upon themselves to interpret and enlarge the results that these specialists have gained.

And these moral interpreters of science are often

wholly unscientific and should be promptly and thoroughly discredited. In discrediting them, it should be our business to show not only that the sciences do not deal with ultimate questions affecting the moral order, but that, by their very nature, they simply cannot. It is in the interests of science itself to keep within its legitimate field.

The subject matter of every natural science is the world of physical objects,—objects in the world of space about us; objects either capable of being apprehended by our sense organs, or imagined as apprehended by them, as stars and strata and plants and animals. The aim of every natural science is the orderly description of such physical objects and their explanation by the laws of causation. The method of natural science is primarily what logicians call the inductive method, the method of observation and experiment; by this method are proved all science's generalizations concerning physical facts. This is what scientific proof ever means—proof by the physical facts. Laws are to be verified by such facts. Hypotheses must be grounded in such facts. Do not forget that, for natural science, facts, to be accredited, must always be facts capable of observation and experiment, facts of the physical world. Otherwise, the very methods of natural science would break down; for its instruments of experimentation and its quantitative equations are fitted only for its characteristic subject matter, the world of physical things and events. These methods grew

out of the desire to describe and explain just this world.

If natural science is this very specific sort of enterprise, it at once appears that it does not and cannot deal with such ultimate questions as concern a moral order without violating its every aim and method, and without going entirely beyond its subject matter. If the sole aim of natural science is the description and explanation of facts as they *are,* it cannot possibly give us a demonstration of facts as they *ought* to be. And yet only such a demonstration would be a demonstration of what is the true moral ideal. It would seem rather absurd to find a physicist discussing whether the law of gravitation *ought* morally to exist; or whether events really *ought* to have causes! Science does not concern itself with such questions. Science does not deal with moral ideals at all, save as the psychologist recognizes their mere existence and their psychological origin and setting.

III

In spite of this very apparent fact, there are so many who persist in erecting a new so-called "science of ethics" upon what they deem a scientific basis that it is well to glance at these attempts still further, just long enough to evaluate them. For instance, the moral standard of pleasure as the true end of life sometimes appears to find encouragement

from biological evolution, psychologically interpreted. Is it not a scientific maxim that all conscious organisms seek pleasure and avoid pain? There has been a tendency for some scientists to hold this doctrine, although recent psychology is more likely to tell us that pleasure is never normally the direct object of desire; that although we do indeed seek objects whose attainment will give pleasure, yet we do not normally seek these objects primarily for the *sake* of the pleasure. For, we are now subtly asked, How may one get pleasure out of any object, say food, or learn that one could get pleasure out of it, unless one desired the food for itself in the first place and only thereupon chanced to find it pleasant? But even if it were proved that we do always desire pleasure, that would not prove that we *ought* to. Is it possible to espouse the monstrous doctrine that any act, no matter what it is, is justified just because we find pleasure in it? If so, the sinner is as good as the saint, for each attains pleasure after his own fashion. The fiendish thrill of the successful murderer may be as pleasant to him as the thrill of the hero to the one who finds joy in the saving of a life.

The retort may be made that science teaches us that the sinner does not really get pleasure in the long run; that we get pleasure in the long run only out of the fulfillment of what are called *normal* desires; so here at least modern science gives us a basis for immutable morality. Seek activities that are normal, be a normal person; and what a normal

person is, science is ready to answer. To be a normal person is to obey the laws of nature, to adjust oneself to one's environment, natural and social. But the trouble here is that both the environment and the individual are constantly changing. One no sooner gets adjusted to things as they are than they alter. This is a growing world. Growing toward what? After all, to adjust ourselves to the world means in the last resort to adjust ourselves to whatever is the *goal* of the world. What is this goal? The only thing science can say here is the vague truism that, at any rate, morals means "progressive adjustment"; when asked further what is the goal of this progress (which we must know if we are to judge whether we are progressing at all!) science can give no answer. What is the goal of evolution no scientist can even guess. What *ought* to be the goal of evolution is utterly outside scientific speculation. Verily science gives us no help here. How may one gain a never-changing ideal from what we now know of evolution? The concept of evolution has accustomed men to think in terms of perpetual change. Nothing stays put. Nothing is final. Nor will our knowledge greatly improve with time, for the goal of evolution is a flying goal; the endless years are ever before it and human knowledge is ever finite. All we can hope for is approximate knowledge; and even that is extremely doubtful. No, even the majestic flux of evolution can give us no certain moral ideal. In fact, its very endlessness of

reach breeds intellectual modesty and the moral skepticism that we have found characteristic of our age. The best science can do is to give us prudential rules, which are fairly accurate for the particular section of the stream of change wherein our little lives are placed. There is no guarantee that even reason itself may not alter its fundamental nature in the endless flow of all things onward! Reason arose as a biological necessity; it is the servant of life, not its master. Even it is no more immutable than its so-called truths.

Observe that what is common in all these attempts to construct morals on the basis of science is the assumption that what actually is or has been is a sufficient clew to what ought to be. This assumption is far from logical, but it is extremely prevalent, even among those who have claims to respectable scientific attainment. They examine how men have morally acted and judged in the past, gather together the agreements as they become evident and then, making a sudden leap in reasoning, announce them as laws of what ought to be for the future. The fallacy is apparent enough when once seen; but the harm does not end merely with making the past of the race mandatory over its future. The more fundamental result is an arrant materialism; for since ethics is to be "scientific," and since natural science concerns itself only with matter, all immaterial ideals are ignored as being outside scientific attention, and to the average man are thus made

to seem unreal. Moral laws become not only the tyranny of the yesterdays over the to-morrows, but are reduced to mere laws of bodily health and of efficiency, to biologic and economic rules of living. And even then what is the sense of saying that we ought to obey these rules when, according to science's law of universal causation, we cannot do anything else, since we ourselves are parts of an evolutionary process that will not be changed to right or left by any caprice of our wills?

None of this is meant to be an indictment of modern science. At most, it is merely a protest against the misuse of science. It is a statement of how science has gone astray among the great body of men who tacitly or openly and, I think, uncritically rely upon their own interpretations of it for a solution of moral problems.

So, again, if the aim of natural science is to describe and explain physical objects, it cannot possibly have anything to say about God or the Soul,—unless, indeed, it claims that these themselves are physical things. Then and then only can natural science prove or disprove them; or, realizing that it does not know everything about the physical world, science may say that, at any rate, it has yet to find such entities within its sphere. Science will not greatly object if, for your purposes, you spell this ignorance as the "Unknowable" and call it God; only, if it is really unknowable, why so sure it is God? Or, if it comforts you to put capitals to Force

and Energy and to kneel before them, science will not trouble to molest your devotions. But concerning a God such as the great religions have recognized, a God that is a spirit, that "dwells not in temples made with hands"; or concerning a Soul that is not flesh and blood, and is not a quantity for weight or measure, natural science has nothing to say. Again, for natural science, such questions are meaningless.

And, finally, natural science is perfectly right in pointing out that in her realm all things pass away, that they are mortal; and that all things that come within her regard do what they are compelled to do by the inflexible necessity of the causes within and around them,—they are "fated," not free. But if any one goes further and asks if there is anything outside the realm of natural science that is immortal and free, science will rightly answer: "I know of no such entities and no such realm. Your question is not pertinent to my business as a scientist. You might as well ask a man in his capacity as a lawyer for expert judgment on a problem in architecture."

IV

What is true of the natural sciences in these matters is just as surely true of the mental and social sciences, although at first it may not seem so, probably because these sciences are not yet so well defined, and especially because some of those who have

devoted themselves to them have not always been so careful to keep within purely scientific limits. Yet, without going into tedious discussion, this much is apparent at once. All the recognized mental and social sciences are at one with natural science in aim and in method, whatever may be said of their subject matter. Here one is constrained to remark that in so far as the social sciences seem to differ from the natural sciences by dealing with matter outside the realm of physical objects and events, they deal with what belongs to the science of psychology. But does the modern science of psychology deal with mental states as such? Does it not rather describe and explain mental phenomena only through those physical processes of the nervous system that accompany them?

However this may be, the only excuse for regarding the social sciences as "sciences" at all is their own avowal that, on the analogy of the natural sciences, their legitimate purpose is to describe and explain social phenomena as they actually are. They are devotees to the "facts" as much as is the physicist or the chemist; and this is in their praise. Now, in the social sciences, no more than in physics or chemistry, can you logically derive from merely what are the facts what *ought* to be the facts. Yet, this is the first task in constructing a moral order. The mere description and explanation of social phenomena as they have been and are does not warrant sociology as a science to deduce so-

ciety as it ultimately ought to be. This is going beyond both the data and method of sociology. The mere descriptive determination of historical events in their interrelations does not give the historian any scientific warrant for announcing what the course of history for the future ought to be made. The social sciences may adopt moral ideals; they may show historic trends toward moral ideals; but they do not and cannot *prove* moral ideals. Nor can they attain to the solution of the ultimate realities, such as God and Immortality, any more than can natural science, because their own definitions of their subject matter and method simply leave out such questions as essentially irrelevant.

If these considerations do not suffice, there is one consideration that will. Not one of the special sciences, natural or social, concerns itself with anything but an abstracted aspect of reality,—not one of them with reality as it is in its wholeness. The chemical truth about things is confessedly not the whole truth; neither is the biological or geological side of reality anything but a partial account of things as they are. Society has its economic side, its historic side, its psychological side; but none of these alone is concrete society in its truth. To get at not merely a partial but a complete view of reality, one must transcend any and all of these special sciences and get a glimpse of the total world of which each special science gives us but a fragment. No science does this. And yet, as we have seen, it

is a *world-view* that we are after as a basis for a moral order and moral confidence!

Of course, one could leave the aims and methods of science as I have described them and engage in other enterprises and call them "science," as some men have done; but it would be only a "sort of science," a science by metaphor, which would be promptly discredited as strictly science by every careful scientist,—such as projects that make the biological concept of evolution explain the whole universe. I shall have something to say about such pseudo-science in its proper place. Unfortunately, there is an abundance of it.

V

But because science rightly says, "I find no moral order, I find no God, I find no Soul, no Immortality in my realm,"—is that the same as saying that the universe holds no such realities? Yes, on one condition; if science's realm is the only reality we can prove to exist, and if scientific method is the only cogent method of demonstration. It is a quite popular impression that this is so. And yet here is a significant fact: *There is not a single scientific specialist of repute who has attempted to prove by scientific method that what science cannot demonstrate is thereby disproved. Science itself has never taught us that all we know is science.* Such a position is either a gratuitous assumption or a con-

clusion of philosophers who have paradoxically gone utterly beyond science to prove that there is no proof beyond science!

Therefore, to say that the subject matter of science is physical objects is not the same as to say that all realities are physical; although this may be so. To say that the method of science is observation and experiment is not to say that the only strictly logical and exact method of attaining truth is observation and experiment; although the truth may turn out to be this; yet if it does, what about mathematics, which is exact enough, and yet which is neither a natural nor a social science? To say that the aim of science is the description and explanation of facts as they are is not to say that there is no demonstrable realm of things as they ought to be; although, again, this may be the truth. The mere fact that science does not pronounce upon these matters is not a legitimate basis for skepticism, but only for open-mindedness. If science were entirely through with her endless task, these would still be open questions left over by science as being outside her legitimate realm, and which science would not have prejudiced in any way.

Anything else is scientific dogmatism, a dogmatism that boldly assumes without proof that science and proof are identical. This may be so; but it is not at all scientific merely to assume it. Let us be as carefully logical in talking about science as we are in talking within science! Scientific dogmatism

that leaps out of its region of proof into the realm of non-scientific realities is even worse than the kind of religious dogmatism that presumes upon giving verdicts on scientific questions. It is worse because science has made more pretensions to logical procedure than religion ever has. The two realms are related; but the relation is not one that permits irrelevant and illogical encroachment. Such scientific dogmatism is bad for the interests of both science and the moral verities. Scientific experts have long appreciated that science progresses in proportion as scientists are exact in the definition of their regions of search.

Our hope that a moral order as a basis for moral confidence might be discovered in the verdicts of modern science has proved in vain. But there is one result of our search that is not absolutely hopeless. We have not yet been forced to moral skepticism as the final outcome, although we have found this to be the unwarranted notion of some of the popular construers of science. I have tried to show clearly how illogical such an interpretation is, and how antithetical to the spirit of science itself. What we have reached at last is merely that science has no answer whatever to give to our questions about a moral order and the great verities that go with it. It is something to know this. What we sorely want to know further is whether there is any other road to a moral order that can be traveled by such men as put their faith in reason.

CHAPTER VI

THE PROOF OF THE TRUTHS WE LIVE BY

In his novel, *Saint's Progress,* John Galsworthy admirably shows how modern science and the World War have profoundly modified our traditional faiths. The "saint" is an other-worldly clergyman of the Church of England, who faces the bewildering task of squaring his dogmas with the new attitudes of mind well represented by his worldly-wise son-in-law, a physician. For this latter spokesman of a modern era, science is the only test of truth; and for him science and demonstrable reason are identical. He is thoroughly aware that this reason has its limits, that there are matters it cannot solve; but he does insist that *"it's the highest test we can apply;* and that behind that test all is quite dark and unknowable."

This is the typical attitude of the contemporary man. Science is all we have. We must rely upon reason, must we not? As for any other way to truth, the door seems closed. The contemporary man is at one with the further challenge of Galsworthy's honest rationalist when he says further: "If you want me to enter a temple of little mysteries, leaving my reason and senses behind—as a Mohamme-

dan leaves his shoes—it won't do to say to me simply: 'There it is! Enter!' You must show me the door; and you can't!"

We may as well accept this challenge. We must show that verily there is a door, and that it leads not to the little mysteries, but to the great verities themselves.

I

The contemporary man is perfectly right when he insists that we must rely upon reason for our convictions, and that this reason must be cogent. Whatever else our age may develop, it will still be an age of reason. But our novelist's modern spokesman, like many of us, in his zeal for reason has made one irrational assumption in spite of himself,—the common assumption that the ways of reason and the ways of science are identical; that when science has had its say, reason also has had its last word.

But while reason includes the reason of science and, indeed, creates it, there is just a bare possibility that the reasoning methods used in what we call science are not the only reasoning methods there are. It is just possible that the alternatives are not science on the one hand, and the irrational faith of Galsworthy's saint on the other. It may be that we can go beyond the limits of science and still remain within the limits of reason; a reason just as exact,

just as conclusive, as science's reason ever was. To say this is not to prove it; but it may be so.

The fact is, every expert logician knows that the ways of reasoning used in science do not exhaust reason; that one may accurately and rationally demonstrate things that conventional science does not at all touch; that there are perfectly reasonable human aims that do not happen to belong to science's particular province, and logical methods not pertinent to the special tasks of science, yet just as decisive and defensible.

It is possible to show this conclusively. But, before doing so, I wish to note that there is every presumption in favor of it; that, otherwise, our lives as well as our sciences would be somewhat absurd.

Certain it is that most of the things we think we know well enough to stake our lives upon them were never proved by science and never can be proved by science. That I am I, the same self this morning that went to sleep last night, no scientific laboratory ever proved or could prove. That life is worth while; that an exalted friendship is a noble thing; that one loves his beloved; that some causes are worthy of sacrifice and death; that the Venus de Milo is beautiful,—no one ever goes to science for the proof of such things. To which of the sciences would one appeal on such a quest? Physics? Astronomy? Sociology? And yet we, including the scientist, act as though we knew these things much better than even the formulas of scientific labora-

tories. Such truths give their character to whole civilizations. For such truths men are sometimes willing to die; whereas, it would be difficult to find a sane person willing to die for the First Law of Motion, or a chemical analysis.

If the scientifically-minded man replies that we do not and cannot "know" such things in the sense of proving them, he has suddenly put most of our knowledge outside the realm of proof, and has confessed how little what we call "proof" is worth to him and to all men who still believe these things. If, on the other hand, he insists that such matters are provable, he has admitted that there are ways of proof that science does not use within its field,—which is precisely what I intended to show. Or, if one is scientifically radical enough to say that these matters are not only unknowable, but just for that reason not certain in any sense; that I can by no rational way be assured that I am I, or that life is worth while, or that there are causes worthy of sacrifice, then let us see at once that such a scientific radical has disposed of one problem only to become involved in a still deeper one, a difficulty fatal to that very science in which he places his uttermost faith. For if every truth must be proved by the demonstrations of science before it is really certain, what about the mass of well-known assumptions that science makes before it can even begin the business of scientific investigation, assumptions that science makes but does not prove; assumptions said to be

at the basis of all science, and yet never demonstrated in any scientific laboratory! Every science has such assumptions which it does not even profess to prove. For instance, every science assumes the Law of Universal Causation, that every event has an adequate cause; yet no science proves it; rather is it held to be the presupposition of all science. In his *Limits of Evolution,* Howison has well shown the assumptions back of evolution, assumptions which no biologist considers within his business to demonstrate; as, the assumptions of time and space, which are themselves not products of evolution surely,—what an absurdity it were to say that there was a time when time was not! No, these, with many other presuppositions, must be first assumed to make evolution in the least possible. Or, take the assumption made by all science that the fundamental character of the universe will be the same to-morrow as yesterday, and the same elsewhere as here, sometimes called the Law of the Uniformity of Nature; what scientist ever proved this? Yet, what scientist thinks he could get along without it?

Precisely because of these assumptions which science itself does not prove, but uses as "working hypotheses," the scientist must say either that there is some method of demonstration outside the limits of science, by which these or kindred assumptions may be proved, or that they are not known or certain at all,—which all at once makes the super-

structure of science as fearfully uncertain as these, its foundations. Nor can one find refuge in the plea that these assumptions, while not absolutely proved by science, are made at least probable by scientific method. For, back of the assumption of even the probability of such a law as that every event has a cause is the assumption of other certainties without which no truth can be even probable, —as the assumption that nature is everywhere and for all time uniform. And, as a matter of fact, the scientist does not act as though he believed that it is only "probable" that a given event has a cause. *While he is working,* he assumes it as an absolute certainty and goes about resolutely to find the cause, with no doubt whatever that however often he may meet with failure, the cause is somewhere to be found.

Is it not much more reasonable, therefore, to say that the assumptions actually necessary for science are not mere guesses; that they can be really demonstrated as probable or certain; and that, since no scientific laboratory can do this sort of thing, there are rational methods of arriving at such truths other than those restricted to the realm of science itself? This would save science, and liberate reason for other tasks than those that science has set for itself. Is there not a suspicion at least that this is a possibility?

All that I am doing now is to arouse a mere suspicion that there are other ways of reasonable proof

than the ways used by what we call science; that it is unreasonable merely to assume that science and reason are identical. I have shown what would happen to our commonest beliefs as well as to science itself if such a view were carried to its logical conclusion. But it remains to remark that if there be no rational knowledge outside science, there can be no such thing as morals, no such thing as a distinction between right and wrong. For, again, science has to do only with what is, never with the demonstration of what ought to be. And yet we need such a demonstration. Truly the moral ideals for which we suffer cannot be thought of by us as mere guesses! A rational man does not choose heroically to live and heroically to die for what he is convinced is a mere conjecture! Moral faith must be rational in order to abide. Is this call for proof in vain because science cannot give it? Once more, is there not at least a suspicion awakened that, beyond the limits of the sciences, reason has still great and legitimate tasks to perform?

Yet scientists in particular and the modern man in general look upon any such enterprise with a justifiable suspicion. The suspicion is amply warranted for two reasons. The first reason is that when men have actually gone beyond science to attain truth, they have all too often engaged in vagaries, sentimental or otherwise, that could not stand the test of the rigid logic that science is accustomed to demand. The second reason, still more

important, is that often when men have tried to enter realms of truth not recognized by the sciences themselves, they have, nevertheless, in the effort to remain "scientific," borrowed the methods of science and illegitimately extended "science" into realms where it has no business, and where its methods have broken down; as, when one tries to introduce the quantitative methods of physical science into the mental world, or into the world of moral values. Such attempts excite the amusement of the strict scientist, if not his righteous derision. They are made because men, enamored of the name, wish to call their disciplines "science," when, strictly speaking, they are not science at all in the sense they pretend. This science-by-analogy is the most pernicious thing we have to-day in the way of the progress of truth. It has done more than anything else to confirm the scientist, and the educated man in general, in the conviction that all voyages in search of truth outside the charted routes of science are doomed to disaster.

II

But now it is well to look at the whole matter constructively, seeking once for all to discover whether, science failing us, there is any other rational way to the great verities that underlie our moral faith; whether reason can prove a moral order, or whether we are predestined to a permanent skepticism on

all those subjects that heretofore have been the greatest themes of religion, of poetry, and of the larger struggles of civilizations. We are not to lose our trust in science. Yet in our search, let us not forget that we trust science for only one reason, namely, because we trust reason itself; and that we must trust any other means of proof for the same reason,—or our reason for trusting science is at once repudiated.

What, then, is the proof that is not science,—the proof of the truths we live by?

The proof that is not science is the same as that by which science itself becomes certain of the underlying principles upon which all its own procedure rests,—the principles to which I have referred as the presuppositions of all science, and without which no science is possible. Nowhere have I said that some such presuppositions are not provable, but merely that they cannot be proved within scientific method. But they are demonstrable, so far as anything is demonstrable. I intend now to show in what way they are demonstrable. Then I intend to show that the moral order and its great verities are demonstrable in precisely the same way. Surely if one gives a proof for the truths of the moral order as cogent as that which science gives for the Law of Universal Causation, or the Law of the Uniformity of Nature, it is enough; especially since these laws are considered well enough proved to base all science upon them! Surely, those who are satisfied only

with scientific proof will be satisfied with the proofs that satisfy science!

Exactly how does one prove such a basal law as the Law of Universal Causation? It has been considered quite respectable to say that such certainty as it possesses is due to the fact that science has never found an instance to the contrary; that whenever it looks for causes it finds them, so far as the phenomena are accessible, and so far as it approaches them with sufficient knowledge and adequate instruments of experimentation. But if this is the only proof for the assertion that every event in the universe has a cause, it is a most doubtful piece of reasoning. For this pretends to be a *universal* law, and the universe is a big place, both wide and deep. How little of the limitless universe to which this law is said to apply without exception does science know anything about! How small is our scientific knowledge of our own planet, even through our most advanced sciences! "Every event has a cause"; yet how many regions of "events" no science yet even touches, or touches only vaguely because of the stubbornness or the complexity of the phenomena! How many sciences are still in their infancy! Is it not a little more than logical daring to say that, because the few events which science has been able to understand thoroughly have been found to have adequate causes, therefore every event in a limitless universe can be accounted for in the same way? Observe, I

do not deny it at this point; indeed, I insist upon it for the time being; but is this the proof of it? Of course, the plain fact is that even among the events daily accessible to us there are many whose causes have never been actually found; else science would have no further tasks. Concerning these events whose causes are not yet completely found, what shall we say? "We shall say" (so runs the favorite answer) "that if we knew more about these events, their causes would certainly be discovered; and even if they are never discovered, we know the causes are there; it is only our ignorance that is at fault. For instance, we cannot now predict what a given human being will do at a certain time next week; but if we knew as much about him as we do about the solar system, we would discover all the causes involved and could predict his actions as certainly as we now do an eclipse of the sun."

This may be true; but merely to say it is not proof of it. Logically, it would be just as cogent to reply: "I hold that some events are of such a character that they are *not* subject to the laws of causation; that if we knew more about these events, their causes would certainly *not* be discovered. You are right, it is only our ignorance that is at fault; but it is not an ignorance of causes, but of the nature of the phenomena, which requires them not. If you knew as much about a human being as about the solar system, you would know enough to know that human acts are *not* predictable as are your eclipses. We

both speak in ignorance; so *I have as much right to a hypothesis built upon ignorance as have you.*"

This answer would lead us at once to the real consideration to which science resorts to substantiate an ultimate hypothesis such as this. For one can easily imagine a scientist replying to such an erratic outburst: "If you make assumptions like that, do you not see that you make all science simply impossible? For do you not see that if the scientist were once convinced that events could not be explained by causes, science's whole search would become irrational? To seek causes is to presume that they are there; and to seek causes and their effects is the central business of science. Science can allow no such exceptional phenomena as you gratuitously suggest, without admitting that a scientific understanding of the world is impossible. The whole scientific system of knowledge would break down. The entire scientific ideal of search would become a will-o'-the-wisp. No, we need the principle that every event is capable of explanation by adequate causes before we can begin a single scientific experiment. Do away with this principle and you do away with science."

Such a reply, if it is correct, contains a real and convincing reason for accepting the Law of Universal Causation (or such a modification of it as I shall later suggest), namely, that science is impossible without it and progresses only in terms of it. And, likewise, this is the real reason for the ac-

ceptance of such other basal principles as the Law of the Uniformity of Nature and the Law of the Conservation of Energy. These are regarded as laws of science because science conceives that it could not exist without them. These are sometimes cautiously called "working hypotheses"; which means that while the scientist is actually working, they cease to be mere hypotheses and become practical certainties.

We may, for the moment, accept these great presuppositions of science for the same reason as that by which science accepts them. Let us understand that we must believe in them just as much as we believe in science itself. If we want science, we cannot evade them.

But, endeavoring as I am to be logical, I am going to persist a little further and ask a question which, at first, may seem abundantly foolish. I shall ask it in all seriousness, however, and for the sake of arriving at a great truth that has thus far eluded our notice. For the present, I accept the statement that if one wants science one cannot escape these great hypotheses. And now for my foolish question: *Why have science at all?* One says that these great hypotheses are necessary to science, which is only the same as saying that they are just as necessary as is science. But how show that science itself is necessary? Of course I admit that it is; but how does one proceed to prove it?

If any one has the patience to answer such a ques-

tion, he is likely to answer it in one of two ways. He may say that we have science because we prefer to have it rather than not to have it, and that this is enough to satisfy a sensible man. I remember meeting a famous scientist, an entomologist, who said that while in the country collecting specimens, people very often watched him wonderingly and bothered him with questions. He answered them in a way that prevented much further conversation. For when the inquisitive loiterer would ask what was the use of capturing all those bugs, he would reply, "No use." When asked further what he did it for then, he would answer, "For fun." This usually had the effect of earning him his solitude or, at least, his peace. But of course such an answer does not state the literal fact; it is a makeshift. The quest for scientific truth may indeed be a fascinating occupation, but it did not arise and does not continue merely for the fun of it, and there certainly is a use to it. The true justification of science is that it serves human life; that by it and by it alone much of the significant progress of civilization is made possible. By its means nature is conquered and shaped to our purposes; cities are built; favorable conditions for living are created; social intercommunication and coöperation are enlarged; and an intellectual interest is given to life such as the race has never before known. What justifies science? The answer is, "Life itself."

But since our quest has carried us this far, I am

going to risk asking a question still more foolish than before; not that I doubt what the answer is, but because I want to reach the root of the whole matter. So far, our result is that we must accept the presuppositions of science in order to have science at all; and that we must accept science in turn because the interests of human life justify it. But suppose some perverted soul raises his voice at this juncture and asks, however fatuously, "What, in turn, is it that justifies human life?"

This may be as foolish a question as you please; but it is a perfectly logical question at this juncture and, once raised, it has to be answered in some way, especially since we have at last rested all our proofs upon the hidden assumption that the life that science serves is itself justifiable. And I am certain that the answer to this question is a simple one, so far as it can be answered at all. The only justification that human beings can give for living is that they find life desirable, that they want it. Beyond the fact of this fundamental want one cannot go. It is sometimes called the "instinct for self-preservation," expressing itself in the "struggle for existence." *Why* men should have the instinct for life nobody knows. It is an ultimate fact. We justify life by the fact that we want it. If any one says that he does not want to live, there is no way in the world of proving to him that life is worth while, except to point out to him, by appealing to

his reason and imagination, that he is mistaken in what he thinks he wants.

I am through asking foolish questions and am ready to summarize what we have attained by our argument. We justify the great underlying laws of science, such as the Law of Universal Causation, by the fact that we want science; we justify science in turn through the fact that we want life. And now, observe, the whole imposing structure rests not upon the inductions of science, but upon *a desire, an ultimate want that will not be gainsaid, that no argument will down; upon which, indeed, as an ultimate fact, all arguments are based.* In the last resort, all the elaboration and all the proof of modern science stands or falls upon the irreducible human desire for life, together with the things that life demands,—which include science and all that makes science possible. Grant that life is worth while, and you grant all the rest. Deny it, and the entire superstructure falls. But you won't deny it. The desire for life and its corollaries are yours just as surely as you are you.

III

The scientist may well answer that if the truths of science are as sure as the universal desire for life, they ought to be sure enough to satisfy anybody. True. But I add that if the sciences and their great presuppositions find ample justification

in the desire for life and its necessary conditions, any body of truth other than science that finds this same justification is equally proved. And I now affirm that *the moral order, and whatever body of truths it necessarily carries, is as surely involved in the desire for life as is the scientific order in which we have such certain faith.*

To live is to act. For human beings, to act is to distinguish between actions as better and worse, right and wrong. To make such a distinction is to imply a criterion of right and wrong, which reflection shows to be a goal which right action attains and wrong action defeats. This fact, then, of an end which some acts serve better than others is as certain as the desire for conscious human life, for it is inextricably involved in every plan of living. Further, once any human being denies this and is so foolish as to consider any deed as good as any other deed, he dies. For instance, for such a being, to eat poison would be the same as to eat food. In other words, to accept life is to accept that there are some things we ought to do and some things we ought not to do, and to solve what they are. But such a solution is a moral order! The idea of a goal or end toward which all right actions lead is nothing more or less than what we call the moral ideal. Thus, to accept life is not only to accept science, which tells us what is, but a moral order, which tells us what ought to be,—which means a moral ideal as a criterion of all the deeds that are

to be called right deeds as distinguished from wrong deeds.

Further if (since life demands science) we are warranted in accepting any additional truths necessary to make a *scientific* order possible, we are just as surely warranted, if life demands a moral order, in accepting any additional truths necessary to make a *moral* order possible. Such truths will be proved just as surely and decisively as science's great presuppositions. In his lecture on "The Dilemma of Determinism," William James says: "I for one feel as free to try the conception of moral as of mechanical or of logical reality. . . . If a certain formula for expressing the nature of the world violates my moral demand, I shall feel as free to throw it overboard, or at least to doubt it, as if it disappointed my demand for uniformity of sequence, for example." This is putting the matter negatively; but the same test applies to the truths we shall accept. Thus, if it should happen that a moral order absolutely requires the working hypothesis of God, or of no God; of Immortality, or of Mortality, these verities are just as certainly proved thereby as are the Law of Universal Causation or the Law of the Uniformity of Nature,—or whatever modification of them is necessary for science. This is proof enough for any scientific mind, is it not? Again I say, surely those who are satisfied only with scientific proof will be satisfied with the proofs that satisfy science!

And here we see a great light. Not only is a moral order as certainly proved as is a scientific order, but even more certainly proved. For science could not justify its own existence as serviceable and necessary to life's "progress" if there were no moral order to interpret what "progress" means, no realm of "things that ought to be" which science serves. Science could not be justified by its *use* if it were not useful to something that ought to be achieved. But, once more, the sciences certainly do not attempt to establish what ought to be, but only what actually is. *A moral order is just as certainly presupposed by science as is any other of science's working hypotheses;* and, with it, every verity logically necessary to establish a moral order. So, now, unless these verities, whatever they are, are established, science itself is in vain! Science does not exist for its own sake; yet science cannot prove anything outside itself that science is for. But that something must be proved somehow. It was with some such idea of an omitted moral order which science certainly proves not, yet as surely requires, that Tennyson protests we are

> Not only cunning casts in clay:
> Let Science prove we are, and then
> What matters Science unto men,
> At least to me? I would not stay.

Without the moral order, which science serves so well, without an ideal of life as it ought to be, which science helps to achieve, there could be no such thing

as the self-sacrificing devotion and valor which the scientific seeker for truth himself so often requires through long and arduous years of search. Such unfaltering devotion can be rationally inspired only by the thought that science leads somewhere and serves life's uttermost values, a goal that is not yet, but which ought to be and shall be. Otherwise, science falls and its assumptions with it. So, now, at last, it stands revealed that not only are the moral order and its implications as surely founded as is the scientific order, but that science itself is finally justified only by the existence of the moral order and its necessary working hypotheses.

From this appears the true place of science in a moral order. Its function is never to dictate what shall be the goals of human struggle, but to furnish the expert means by which these goals shall be attained. This is its great and never-ending contribution to civilization. When science becomes an end in itself, civilization becomes abortive. When science gives us the necessary laws by which all progress must proceed; when it furnishes us through chemistry, physics, engineering, medicine, and the countless other sciences, the manner in which we are to mold ourselves and our environments to the ideal of what ought to be, it becomes the key to all certain advance. No science can tell me whether I ought to go to New York; but if it is once decided that I ought to go, I shall be utterly dependent upon science for the best means to get there. Thus,

science becomes one of the greatest achievements of any civilization, once granted a certain goal which it serves. But ever is science the servant of life, not its master. Out of life's needs it arose. It should be a passion. Into life it returns transfigured; and that is its worth and glory.

IV

The proof of the truths we live by has turned out to be not within the methods of experimental science, yet involved in that science. If it is not the proof ordinarily recognized by the scientist, one might ask if, by any chance, it is nearer the proof of the Philosopher, the Poet, or the Prophet. Our highway to truth may be one of the highways they tread. The fact is, it combines the ways of all three. It is the way of the Philosopher, whose trust is in reason and whose most frequent proof of ultimate premises is that what cannot be denied without contradiction cannot be denied at all. Technically, this is what is called the "dialectical proof." But what it really amounts to is that whatever violates human nature as it really is violates what human nature will accept as truth. In the last resort, it is an analysis of what human life fundamentally demands, being what it is; of what human nature ultimately and unequivocally desires. This has been our region of proof of a moral order, as it is the region of the final justification of science.

It is here that not only the Philosopher and the Scientist, but the Poet and the Prophet are suddenly found to agree. For all four must agree that the only "proof" of what we ultimately desire is an ultimate Fact discoverable within ourselves; the Fact of a desire for life, with all that it involves, from which logic starts to reason, yet which it cannot deduce, but only finds. The search for this Fact is the search for the Beatific Vision of both Prophet and Poet, found, if you please, not by logic, but by experience, and expressed best not by logic, but by art. In this sense, truth is often expressed not only by syllogisms, but by the great temples and poems and symphonies. Truth not only reasons with Aristotle, but sometimes sings with Homer. All great men who have "found themselves" have come upon this Fact of inexpugnable desire and its interpretation. They went on the great adventure, the great experiment, which sought this Fact in its full meaning; and when they found it, they rejected all else and erected all truth upon it, whether it was science, or philosophy, or poetry, or religion. Inspiring Plato's ideal world, Paul's utter martyrdom, Dante's ascent of Hell, Shakespeare's tragic dooms and triumphs, and Darwin's vast discovery was the finding of this basic Fact in some guise, the Fact of a supreme desire that would not be gainsaid, that was the key to the meaning of life, that *was* life. These men became "geniuses." Their souls were on fire. They were inspired. They

were the great experimenters, who through storm and stress found what the "instinct for self-preservation" and the "struggle for existence" really means. Their results may have been abundantly wrong. If so, we must be very, very cautious, that is all. But their method of the final proof of the truths we live by was right. They came inevitably and logically to this: If one would have any truth, one must know that one must start somewhere. And one must start where life starts. Whatever life fundamentally and consistently and inexpugnably demands is true and must be fought for, whether it be a science and its presuppositions, or a philosophy, or a religion.

We started upon a quest for a rational and provable basis for confidence in a moral order. We have found it, if we can trust logic in the least. But so far, we have only shown that a moral order is logically necessary. Just what a moral order involves has not yet even been attempted. But this is all-important. We have found the faint beginnings of a road to the truths we live by. Whither does it lead? Just what are these truths? Our task is only begun. Having passed the first logical crisis of our search, the most interesting part still remains before us. We know what are alleged to be some of the necessary hypotheses of science; what, now, are some of the necessary hypotheses for a moral order, that is, besides the hypothesis of science itself?

The first of these necessary truths for a moral

order has already been determined. There can be no moral order without a moral ideal by which right and wrong are to be distinguished. What is this ideal? I have already shown that our age is rife with conflicting interpretations of it. I have also already submitted a solution of this conflict, emerging in the conclusion that the true moral ideal, the least that one can get along with without contradiction, is what I have tentatively called Total Self-realization, which attempts rationally to conciliate all conflicting ideals. I based this conciliation not upon a guess, but upon a fact, a fact as basal as life itself, nay, a fact that *is* life itself; namely, the desire that all desires be fulfilled so far as may be. I tried to point out that broad as is such an ideal, it is not indefinite and is not futile.

I shall have much more to say about it now, as are unfolded one by one the other great verities which it logically calls for, to be made completely definite and reasonable.

PART II

THE GREAT VERITIES

CHAPTER VII

IMMORTALITY AS A PROBLEM FOR TO-DAY

The question of personal immortality does not strike the contemporary man as of great practical importance. "One world at a time" is a quite prevalent expression of his every-day attitude toward it. His life is planned upon the certainties of this world rather than upon conjectures about a world to come. For, it must be confessed that, to the man of to-day, immortality is largely conjectural. In idle hours it is a pleasing speculation, in which, moreover, any one may engage with equal authority; it is a faith to be encouraged in churches and at the last rites for the dead; but in life as we live it, it is not a serious problem. So, as Wells says, "active and capable men of all forms of religious profession to-day tend in practice to disregard the question of immortality altogether." [1]

The contemporary man is probably under a misapprehension. I think it can be shown that it does make a vast difference to our practical concerns if it happens that death is surely the end of them, or if it can be shown that it is as surely not the end of them. Any man, as soon as he thinks seriously

[1] H. G. Wells, *Anticipations*, p. 343.

knows this as truly as he knows that it would make a practical difference should he learn that his life here on earth would certainly end to-morrow. Immortality would make an infinitely greater difference. The real reason why immortality does not practically concern the man of to-day is that he is quite convinced that the question cannot be solved. Unsolvable questions are not questions a sensible man, even if he be religious, can build his daily life upon, whatever he may aspire to on Sundays.

In all this we hardly realize how much our age differs from certain other conspicuous ages of the world's history,—ages that possessed a positive belief in a life after death and built their civilizations upon it. There have been signally great men, preeminent logicians of their times, who have been sure of it, such as Plato, Leibnitz and Kant; and great eras when nearly every human institution was touched by this vision, made certain by a great religion, a great art, or a great philosophy. But even if the contemporary man fully realized the revolution in the attitude toward death which the world has undergone, he would doubtless reply that such great ages and men either believed without proof, or that they accepted evidence which the more critical modern mind cannot regard as conclusive.

Undoubtedly, on so important a matter, if it is to be made of truly practical significance, the modern is not to be satisfied with a vague hope or a sen-

timental faith. This is an age of certitude. If there is to be any genuine revival of interest in the question of immortality, it must be motived by a conviction that the problem can be actually solved in some measure, and in an honest, straightforward way, without logical juggling; and especially with due regard for all the facts which present-day science accepts as true. And, again, the man of to-day is intensely doubtful that any such attempt will lead to anything definite.

The man of to-day may be right. But it does no harm to look at the evidence quite critically and to see just where it logically leads. In doing so, we should bear in mind that there are only four possible answers to the question, Are we immortal? We must conclude either that we are; or, that we are not; or, that we cannot know; or, that at any rate we do not know. Later I will show that it makes all the practical difference in the world to our lives and to our common civilization just which of these answers we finally are forced to accept.

I

A little while ago, in a hotel lobby, I chanced to hear a discussion concerning human immortality. The conclusion of the whole matter was summarized by a remark of one of the group, uttered with an air of finality: "I tell you, when all is said and done, we die just as a dog dies; and that is all there

is to it." Just then, I ventured to interfere with the question, "Will you tell me just what happens to a dog when it dies?" The genial spokesman, whom I happened to know, had the fairness to let my query trouble him a little. But what he meant to convey was quite clear, and a common conviction, namely, that when our bodies die, it is the end of us.

I mention this incident because it is a distinctively modern tendency of men touched by science to obliterate the distinction between mind and matter, between the so-called natural and spiritual worlds, and to reduce mind to body. Mind or soul tends more and more to be regarded as a function of bodily states; or, in some sense, a physical phenomenon. Partly, this is the result of the prevalent scientific passion to simplify phenomena. Mostly, it is the result of the popularization of modern experimental psychology; especially the result of its emphasis upon the dependence of our mental states upon what goes on in our physical brains and nervous systems. Psychologists find no minds anywhere apart from bodies, and it seems clear to many that every mental event is determined by some bodily cause. The very elements of our mental life, namely, our sensations, we obtain through our bodily sense organs. Such subtle and seemingly spiritual things as our power to remember, our most sacred emotions, the habits that make character, are quite closely identified with bodily changes. More and

more, idiocy and crime, which once were considered spiritual defects, have come to be looked upon as diseases of the physical brain, to be treated largely by physical means. At length, mental functions have been so accurately localized in the brain that detailed maps have been made of them; and brain surgery has actually made it possible to mend the mind by mending the tissues of the head! Compare the mental equipment of men and of the lower animals, or of different races of men. You will find it correlated with the size, shape, and character of their physical brains. What, then, is more certain than that since a mind or soul is found only with a physical body, develops with it, changes with it, this same mind or soul is really only a finer physical phenomenon and ceases to exist when the body dies?

I do not assert that the modern psychologist himself actually draws this conclusion. Most, if not all psychologists, hold aloof from such a sweeping inference as either unwarranted, or as utterly outside their province. But most people acquainted with the modern correlation of mental states with bodily states feel themselves inevitably led to the belief that the mind is the brain, or is so dependent upon it that the mind must perish with the body. Such a materialistic view of mind is no new thing. Before the Christian era, Lucretius, the Roman poet, sang that the soul comes to life with the body, grows with the body, and dies with the body, so that

in old age, just as one would expect, judgment falters and speech and thought both wander; the old age of the body is the beginning of the death of all we are.

Yet, while many moderns who are thus convinced that mind is only another form of matter see no other conclusion than that we perish with our bodies, there are current at least three desperate and yet fairly popular attempts to prove some sort of immortality within this conception.

The first attempt starts by reminding us that after all, even for science, there is such a thing as immortality, since science admits that "nothing perishes." Certainly, science is willing to assent to this, calling the truth by various names, such as the "indestructibility of matter" or the "conservation of energy." But when we examine the significance of this truth further, we find that what it means is not that *no* thing perishes, but that *all* things perish, except matter, or energy. What conceivable encouragement to the hope of immortality is it to be told this? Does it solace me to be informed that although all particular forms of matter pass away, *including myself,* yet matter itself still persists? Has such an "immortality" any practical significance whatever? Is it not rather a ghastly jest to one who is looking for a ground of hope? This first attempt fails.

The second attempt, while frankly admitting that individuals pass away, calls our attention to the

fact that, in any event, the race survives. Men die, but Man remains. We can live in posterity, passing on our thoughts and deeds, our sciences and arts and social institutions to future generations, through which we live again in a progress that never ceases. We die; but the race is immortal. To wish it otherwise is merely to indulge our selfishness. To accept it is to be at once scientific and creditably big-minded. This view of immortality has been beautifully expressed in the familiar lines of George Eliot:

> Oh may I join the choir invisible
> Of those immortal dead who live again
> In minds made better by their presence.

The answer to this worthy aspiration is, first, that no scientist ever presumed to prove that the human race is immortal, that it will remain on earth forever, still less its progress to everlastingly higher things. The reply of the typical scientist is likely to run thus: "We have not sufficient evidence to tell you how long the human race will last. If you press the question, we are quite certain that it will not last forever. Species are constantly changing and passing away. There is no proof that any kind of life will continue on earth always. So far from assuring you of the race's immortality, we cannot even assure you that any race, new or old, will be here after a long time." Another refutation of the attempt before us is that

the immortality of the race is not the kind of immortality men seek when they ask, Are we immortal? The immortality that has moral significance for men, and which we are discussing, is the immortality of individuals, which gives them an everlasting chance of individual progress. So, the second attempt fails. It claims to be scientific and unselfish; yet, as we see, it is not scientific; and any view that annihilates the self that holds it is an unselfishness that contradicts itself.

The third attempt is the attempt of modern spiritualism, or spiritism. The objection will at once be raised that the consideration of spiritualism does not properly fit in this place because we are still supposed to be dealing with the views of those who hold that mind can be reduced to matter. But I hasten to call attention to the fact that although speaking of "spirits," spiritualism never actually deals with anything but material evidences, material manifestations, phenomena that appeal to the senses, such as audible rappings and voices, visible writings and phantasms, tactual and other sensations, requiring physical stimuli, and immediately evidencing only a physical object. It does no good to say that the soul is a "finer" matter or an "astral" body; it is matter and body still, and no spirit is discovered yet. If it is held that while not themselves spiritual, these phenomena are "manifestations" or "materializations" of something that is spiritual, the whole question is begged. The mere

presence of a finer body after death does not prove the existence of a spirit any more than the presence of a coarser body before death proves the existence of a spirit. Equally in both cases, one has inferred something one has not found; for every item of the phenomena is something that appears to sense, which is another way of saying that it is a physical thing. And if it is a physical thing, it is subject to the laws of matter and perishes sooner or later with all material forms. Spiritualists sometimes lament that science neglects the data of spiritualism and of "psychic research." Well, on the the face of it, this is to insist that spiritualistic phenomena are actually accessible to scientific method, which is to say that they are of the character of the phenomena with which science may properly deal, namely, physical. Psychical research has indeed uncovered many interesting facts, to which reputable scientists might well pay more serious attention. But in all this array of spiritualistic events, science could never come upon a soul or spirit. For such events as spiritualism deals with are ever in matter's world of space and time, express themselves through matter, as when they speak or rap, and are thus so far only a form of matter. So I insist upon classifying spiritualism under the attempts to prove immortality within the limits of the identification of mind and body. It makes no difference of how "fine" matter the spirit of the spiritualists is made, it is still matter.

But, one may say, what of that? If *some* form of the self, whether a finer matter or not, survives the body, does not spiritualism make its point good? The answer is, "No"; not if the point to be proved is that we are immortal. For the most that is proved by any or all spiritualistic evidence is that we continue for some time after death. It offers no proof whatever that the continuance is everlasting. Indeed, since the continuance is of matter, albeit a finer matter, it is the continuance of something all of whose forms perish at last in their very nature. For science knows no material forms or individuals that can possibly retain their integrity forever. And spiritualism appeals to the consideration of science.

It is pertinent to remark here that granting that spiritualistic phenomena prove our continuance after death for a little or a great while, it reveals a life that few of us would care to live, or care to have our friends live. Here, of course, we are upon treacherous ground; for whatever spiritualist I cite, many of the rest are likely to say that I happen to have chosen some of the less credible evidences. It seems, however, to be a quite common belief among spiritualists that spirits may be summoned from the other world to communicate with this. Such summonses are quite frequent, especially for well-known men. I wonder how often the spirit of Shakespeare has been summoned since he died. If he has appeared one hundredth

as often as he has been said to appear, he must be heartily weary of it. And yet, he seems to have no way of avoiding it. And when the great dead communicate with us, how their mastery of thought and language has deteriorated! The Byron that wrote *Childe Harold* now writes drivel. Some of us have seen it, and we are sorry for him; and we do not want to be in an environment that affects one that way; and certainly, we do not wish to be called from our spiritual labors at any time of the day or night to answer foolish questions foolishly.

At any rate, the third attempt fails. Accepting all the phenomena of spiritualism, one finds that such "facts" do not and cannot prove immortality in any sense; that they do not even prove the existence of "spirits"; and that to call the results "spiritualism," or "spiritism," is an obvious misnomer.

The three attempts to prove immortality within materialistic presuppositions are futile. That is, we may as well frankly confess that within the realm of natural science there is no such thing as demonstrating the immortality of human selves. With physical science, it is only matter, or energy, together with its laws that may be said to last endlessly. I am not sure that science actually proves even this; but at any rate, this is the utmost limit of its assumptions concerning the question. All else passes away, has a beginning and

an end. If all we are is physical—and this is all that science can deal with—Dühring is right; there is no basis of consciousness except the body, and an individual consciousness is merely a specific combination of atoms of which death is the dissolution. If matter is all we are, then we share the fate of all the forms of matter, expressed with such melancholy grandeur so long ago:

> The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all that it inherit, shall dissolve
> And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind.

Or, as a famous Christian saint said long before, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

II

So far, we have at least found where not to look for a proof of immortality. If only we would accept science's word for it, and cease trying to prove immortality within science's limits, and desist from contorting its conclusions to our cherished desires, it would be better for us and for the truth. But in abandoning any hope of a proof within science, it is absolutely essential to realize another fact equally true; namely, that while science cannot prove immortality, neither can science disprove it,—unless, indeed, science also proves beyond

doubt that it can successfully reduce everything we are, including our minds, to our bodies. Once that were done, our whole question would be solved by science, and solved forever in the negative. In all ages when mind and body have been identified or confused, immortality has not been an issue, as in the early schools of Greek philosophy. Later, with Socrates and Plato, the problem becomes acute; and note that at the same time the mind and the body become sharply distinguished. So, before we proceed any further it will be well for us to ask a little more critically whether the only modern science that deals with such matters, namely psychology, has succeeded in reducing our minds to our brains, our mental states to our physical states, our souls to our bodies. If it has done this conclusively, it is folly to go further with our discussion. Individual immortality is then definitely disproved. Certainly, the body is not immortal.

There is an astonishingly wide impression that just this is the verdict of modern experimental psychology; or, in any event, that all its evidence thus far points in this one direction. We have casually referred to this evidence before. We must face it fairly now.

In so far as psychology is a science—and few will question that it is—it attempts the explanation of mental events through reference to what happens in the body. Concerning just what is the real relation of mental states to bodily states, many psychol-

ogists have nothing to say. So far as they have anything to say, they have tended to divide into two great schools, the Interactionists and the Parallelists.

The names well suggest the doctrines. The Interactionists assert that bodily and mental events cause one another. The evidence of this is so voluminous that one can select only a few instances. Speaking of the relations between the supply of blood to the brain and the states of consciousness, Ladd reminds us that "a slight increase of this circulation, resulting from a small quantity of alcohol or other drugs, or from the hearing of interesting news, produces an increased speed in the mental train. Reaction-time is found to vary with changes in the circulation. In the delirium of fever the wild and quickly-moving condition of the thoughts, fancies, and sensations is a direct expression of the kind of work which is going on, because of the accelerated heartbeat and the disordered character of the blood within the cerebral arteries. . . . The character of dreams is determined, to a considerable extent, by the position of the head and the way in which this position affects the cranial circulation. Hallucinations not infrequently are immediately made to cease when the person having them assumes the standing posture, or has leeches applied to the head." On the other hand, the mind's causal influence upon the body is seen even in its effect upon "the nutrition of tis-

sues, the circulation of the blood," and in general upon "the healthy or diseased nature of the vital processes." The causal relation works both ways, from body to mind and from mind to body. To quote Ladd again in a characteristic passage: "If abnormal digestion produces melancholy, it is equally true that melancholy causes bad digestion. . . . . Irregular action of the heart, caused by organic defect or weakness, occasions a feeling of indescribable alarm in the soul; fear is followed, through the action of the mind upon the nervous centers, by functional incapacity of the heart. The impure condition of the arterial blood which is characteristic of certain diseases brings about a chronic state of mental lassitude or anxiety; care, chagrin, and ennui poison the arterial blood. The lesion of the cortical substance produced by a growing abscess or broken blood-vessel impairs the mind's powers of sensation and thought; excessive thought and overexcited feeling wear away the brain."[2] Such are some of the facts that make the position of the Interactionist plausible. We shall see later what bearing such a position has on the question of reducing our minds to our bodies.

Although vigorously differing from the Interactionist in many respects, most of the other psychologists, represented by Parallelism, still thoroughly agree that there can be no explanation of mental

[2] George Trumbull Ladd and Robert Sessions Woodworth, *Elements of Physiological Psychology*, pp. 643–645. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

states save through bodily states. They are, in general, willing to accept all the facts given by the Interactionist to prove his theory; only they insist that such facts taken by themselves do not prove Interactionism at all. Bring forward all the facts you please, such as I have just quoted, to show that mental events are always related to bodily events; the question still remains, says the Parallelist, whether they really *cause* one another. Let us resort to an illustration; the number-series will afford us one. Write down the odd numbers in a row, 1–3–5 and on indefinitely. Then, under each odd number in order, write the even numbers, 2–4–6 and on indefinitely. What is the result? You have two parallel series of numbers, for every odd number of which, written above, you have an even number in the series below. Here they are:

1 3 5 7 9 11 13 15 17 19 21 etc.
2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 etc.

Given any specific odd number in the series, you have a specific even number; and given any even number, you have a specific odd number. But just because there is an even number occurring every time an odd number occurs, do the odd numbers *cause* the even numbers? Does 3, for instance, *cause* 4? No, these are *parallel* series, but not causally related series. So, says the Parallelist, are the two streams of events called our mental and bodily states. Every mental state *involves* a bod-

ily state; but that in itself does not prove that the two streams of events are *causally* related,—that the body is the cause of events in the mind. If we are critical, this is a matter for further consideration. In short, all the facts adduced for Interaction may be accepted, and yet one need not interpret the facts as the Interactionist does. *If* a mental state, then a bodily state; *if* a bodily state, then a mental state; this is as far as the facts go, granting they go even this far; but this is by no means saying that *because* a mental state, a bodily state, or the reverse. No causal relation or interdependence of body and mind is proved by merely showing that they are related. The bow and the cord are "useless each without the other"; but the one does not cause the other.

Fortunately for us, we are not compelled to decide the famous and never-ending debate between these two great schools, for the supreme fact for us is that *by neither is mind successfully reduced to matter.* Both, indeed, agree that for psychology there can be no mental states without bodies. But because there can be no mind without a body does not prove that the mind *is* the body,—not a whit more than because one cannot have a sea without a shore, the sea *is* the shore! Further, this is not a mere logical subtlety, but is the actual verdict of most expert psychologists themselves, no matter to what school they may belong. Even the Interactionist most frequently hastens to say that even granting

that consciousness is a different sort of thing from the body, one can still have a causal relation between them. This is to insist that to assert a causal relation between body and mind does not in the least decide what is the *nature* of mind. That is left an open question. So, both Interactionist and Parallelist agree with what we are here contending for,—that psychology need not and does not reduce the mind to the body, no matter how much they may refer to the latter in explaining the former. Even if one hold that mental and physical states are two sides of the same thing, one admits by this very contention that there are *two* sides. To hold this is not to imply that the mental is reduced to the physical any more than that the physical is reduced to the mental. The sides are just as opposed to one another as two sides of anything always are.

And finally it is most pertinent to remark here, for the benefit of those who think that the evidence of science is against the immortality of the self, that modern psychology itself insists that it does not deal with *selves* or *souls* or *minds* at all, mortal or immortal. It deals with mental states as they come and go, and only with these. It never even asks if there be a mind or soul or self, to which these mental states might be said to "belong." This is a query it considers beyond its concerns.

It is abundantly clear, then, that the popular notion that science identifies mind and body, or mind and matter, is mistaken. We may now return with

increased certainty to our former conclusion that no science, not even psychology, can give us any answer whatever concerning human immortality; nor does it prejudice the possibility of it by reducing all that we are to our physical bodies. If anything, we are led to be more predisposed than before to the conviction that our bodies are not all we are. For it is an absolute surety that if science could possibly have reduced our mental states to our physical states, it would have done so long ago in the interests of scientific simplicity. But in this it has utterly failed. This failure proves nothing final, but it gives us hope.

III

We have been showing all along how difficult it is to reduce mind to matter. Let us add now that it is actually much easier to reduce matter to mind, strange as this may seem.

First of all, it is easier for you to deny the existence of your body than the existence of your mind. How is that? Well, suppose you deny that your mind really exists; do you not see that you are at once guilty of a contradiction? For if you deny that your mind exists, you are forgetting that it is your very mind (supposedly nonexistent!) that makes this denial. So your very denial proves what you deny. In other words, to deny your mind's existence is a contradiction and an absurdity. *No*

such contradiction is involved in denying that the body is real. If either mind or matter taken by itself is the sole reality, we will find it logically easier to choose mind. And strange as is this position to the average person of common sense, most great thinkers from the dawn of history to the present day have taken it. The great Plato, "the bible of the learned for twenty-two hundred years," held that only ideas are finally real, and that mere matter is an illusion. Aristotle maintains at bottom the same thing in another way. It is the vital message of those we call the great idealists, from ancient Greece to modern America,—of Leibnitz, of Berkeley, of Fichte, of Hegel, of Royce, who reach the same conclusion by very different highways of thought. And if the average man insists that all these men were merely dreamers, impractical, away from such scientific currents of thought as mark the rigid logic of the twentieth century, I remind him that some of the most eminent scientific men of our day hold that even science, when critically viewed, never actually gets to such a thing as "matter"; that it gets no further than the mental states that we call our "sensations." Its laws are laws merely of a world of such sensations, beyond which we cannot go to some mysterious substrate called "matter" or "energy." No, such entities are regarded as mere hypotheses, assumed for the sake of simplifying scientific procedure.

The reader may consult any or all of these great

thinkers for himself. The one fact that arrests the attention of them all, as it must arrest the attention of any man, is that while we know our minds directly (since to know at all is to know with a mind), we know matter only indirectly, through the mind. That is, our consciousness is something we directly experience; but any matter, outside of consciousness, we only *infer;* and, further, to make the inference convincing is a difficult logical task.

In other words, if one adheres to strict logic, and if to be mortal is to reduce mind to body, the harder thing to prove is not that we are immortal, but that we are mortal! Not that we have minds, but that we have bodies! For our bodies are inferences of our minds, known only through our minds, which, not being physical, are beyond the physical conditions of death. Yes, it is far easier to reduce body to mind than mind to body. The challenge ought not to be to prove that we are undying but to prove that we could possibly perish!

IV

There are ways of proving immortality, many of them, of which the average man is not likely to be aware for the simple reason that the whole problem is a very technical one, and to master the reasoning involved requires years of training and abundant patience. Here we face an anomaly. The average man of culture is not at

all surprised if you tell him that to solve the problems of calculus requires considerable preparation in the technical foundations of the subject. This is exactly what he expects, and he does not demur. But when you tell him that to solve the problem of immortality means a mastery of complex factors, which cannot be gained without arduous intellectual labor, he somehow feels that you are merely getting ready to blind his judgment with logical subtleties so that you may prove anything you please. Men would not think of debating a problem of thermodynamics without preparation in all the technicalities involved; but when the infinitely more abstruse problem of the nature of a mind and the length of its continuance is broached, all men suddenly think that they speak with equal knowledge and authority.

The average man himself, upon reflection concerning even a few of the factors that the problem implies, must admit that such an attitude is unreasonable and extremely unfavorable to any profitable discussion of the subject. Such an attitude is born of the same dogmatism as leads so many men to assume that "modern science disproves immortality" without in the least investigating what science is, what is its region of search, what sort of truth its methods actually attain, and what its leading exponents really have to say on the problem. I have tried to do away with this particular dogmatism by an appeal to the logic of the facts. This

other dogmatism that assumes the simplicity of the problem of immortality, and the equal authority of every man to dispose of it offhand, I could easily dissipate by a straightforward appeal to the extreme difficulty of the facts.

Avoiding such technical matters as this would call for, I merely pause by the way to remark that many of the great arguments for immortality are attempts to prove that there is an aspect of our real selves that is either spaceless, or timeless, or both. Such arguments become very intricate, and I shall not lay stress upon them here. Still, every man ought to know that if things were not in Space and Time, they could not possibly perish. For the decay and death of any object is at least a process involving spatial changes in the parts of the object, a spatial dissolution of the parts; and this change also takes time, and the moment of death itself is a moment in Time. It follows as absolutely certain that if any reality could be proved to be without the limitations of either Space or Time, it could not die; a spaceless being could have no spatial dissolution of its parts, and a timeless being could have no such thing as a time when it ended. Since death is an event in Time, it could never occur in a timeless world. The argument becomes complete when it is shown that the nature of our consciousness is such that it cannot be thought of as spatial (have thoughts any size?) or temporal. For if consciousness is either spaceless or timeless,

one of the logical conditions of death is annihilated and death simply cannot happen to it. If the human self is primarily of the nature of consciousness, it is immortal. It cannot pass away with the body.

V

All such arguments for immortality have their merit. Logically, when fully understood, they make immortality more probable than not. But I have yet to find the man who is convinced by them. There is always the lurking suspicion that some flaw could be discovered in such arguments if only one were expert enough; and the average man, far from achieving any real moral faith by such "proofs," is likely to be led to a sort of helpless bewilderment and despair if not to downright skepticism. If these proofs were the only ones to offer, this chapter would never have been written. They have been mentioned at all only to convince those who are sure that they are loyal citizens of an age of reason that immortality cannot be so lightly denied as many persons superficially and summarily deny it.

I now come to the proof that to me is most convincing; the only proof, too, that is likely to convince the man impatient of philosophical subtleties, and yet earnestly seeking a reasonable hope and faith that does not violate either science or common sense. This proof frankly depends upon our suc-

cess in showing that without immortality our lives would be manifestly and absurdly inconsistent and unreasonable. It is in accordance with the method of proof outlined in the preceding chapter,—the proof of all truths we live by. In this proof it must be shown that the chance of immortal personal development is the only hypothesis that gives the world any sure meaning; that, otherwise, life is a mockery, a contradiction, whose values are shattered and made vain. After such a proof, the arguments that I have heretofore mentioned may become important adjuncts, and so be raised to a worth they do not have by themselves.

The argument with which we are now concerned is not based merely upon that great mass of facts which forms the region of what is called science. In the last chapter I think I showed conclusively that there is another realm of truth that has always been recognized as having at least equal importance with the mere enumeration and classification of endless facts; it is the truth that shows of what *use* these facts are. Man is forever face to face with things as they are on the one hand, and with things as they ought to be on the other; not only with facts, but with something more, namely, what shall be done with the facts; in other words, what ideals they shall be made to serve. Now, the important thing to see is that these ideals are just as real as the facts. Science does not deal with them at all; but man certainly and continuously recognizes them,

acts in terms of them, fights for them, dies for them. These ideals are, after all, the fundamental realities of life, in terms of which the progress of civilization is ever judged. Beyond all the facts that we know, we seek what is not yet accomplished, an ideal, not a fact. For instance, beyond the great body of truth we have reached we seek the truth that does not yet exist, that is not yet a fact; so, too, beyond all the goodness we observe in ourselves and in one another we seek the goodness that is not yet, which is not yet a fact, but an ideal; and, again, beyond all the imperfect beauty that nature gives and man has made we seek a beauty that was never yet on sea or land, not yet a fact; but, nevertheless a stubborn reality that will not be gainsaid, an ideal of the human spirit. That is, we live not for facts primarily, but for ideals primarily; the ideals in terms of which it is our task to use and mold all the facts that science can give. These ideals for whose use all facts are found and cherished are, in turn, the most important things of our lives. And any ultimate proof of anything, including immortality, must surely take strict account of them as the most unquestioned things we know. No logic that is serious can ever ignore them.

It is well to point out again that the justification of science itself and its enterprise rests upon its acceptance of such ideals, which science ever serves, but never creates. We have found that science's so-called ultimate laws, as the Law of Universal Causa-

tion, is considered proved if it is proved necessary to render science possible; but science, in turn, is justified only as it is proved to contribute to those ideals of life that men insist upon. Yes, the ultimate reality of all realities is the ideals we fight for; otherwise, there would be no struggle upward, scientific or any other. Let it be known once for all, we struggle not primarily for facts, but for purposes; not for laws of biology or physics, but for the values these serve so well. All our loyalties, all our heroisms, all our progress, are based upon such supreme values; never upon mere facts unillumined by purposes that give them worth.

So it is our fundamental ideals that finally give the world any consistent meaning. When we men do things in the face of struggle and sacrifice, we do them on the assumption that our human purposes are, in some measure, capable of molding the world of facts to the image of the heart's desire; that our wills are not determined in the last resort even by reason, although they shall be forever reasonable; but that even our reasoning is a means of attaining the purposes of our desire and will. So it is that the key to the understanding of reality, as human beings must conceive it, is to be found in a careful study of the inalienable purposes of the will that make man what he is. An easy way to make this plain is to refer to what we understand as evolution, since we have faith in that at least. The presupposition of all evolution is "the will to live,"

which every living thing possesses, sometimes called "the struggle for existence," or "the instinct for self-preservation." Now, this will or purpose to live can never be accounted for by evolution itself; it is not to be derived by any possible means from the "natural selection" of a "favorable variation"; for the will to live is presupposed before evolution can be conceived to start. That is, the desire for life is the fundamental truth back of all life's meaning. And now, further, evolution has to presuppose not merely the desire to live, to exist; but something more, the desire for a certain *kind* of life. Otherwise, evolution would have no *direction,* no continuous trend of a certain *character,* which all evolution certainly manifests. That is, evolution is not simply the story of more and more life, but of definite developments towards specific *sorts* of life; the desire for life is not only a matter of quantity, but of quality. Men—even some of the lower animals in crises—actually prefer to die than to continue in certain kinds of existence that defeat this more or less blind desire. Thus martyrs. Thus such a heroic cry as "liberty or death."

The unsolved question is, *What* kind of life does the very struggle for life involve, especially on the part of human beings, with whom we are now concerned? Is this question answerable? And then, granting an answer, the final and crucial question becomes very clear, namely this, Is this sort of life that man in his ultimate nature demands such as

inextricably involves immortality? *If so, then immortality is justified just as surely as science is justified.* For even science is finally justified only through showing that it is necessary for life as the human spirit undefeatedly desires to live it! Let us consider, then, very carefully the meaning of this human struggle for life.

It is indubitable, is it not, that an inevitable part of our human struggle for life is the struggle for truth. Certainly, a large part of human endeavor through all history has been prompted by this desire. Of it have been born all the philosophy and science that mark the progress of mankind. I think it is Ruskin who says, "Where the search for truth begins, there life begins; where the search for truth ceases, there life ceases." Not only the history of mankind in general, but our own individual spirits testify to this desire. Not a man that does not desire knowledge, either as revealed in his more or less blind gropings, or in a conscious and willing search for it. The next question is, Just *how much* of truth does the human spirit desire? How much would satisfy it? Surely there is no limit to the amount of truth man desires, is there? Ever at the end of his search, urging him on through countless ages, is the whole of truth.

Still we say as we go,
Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know,
That we shall know one day.

No mere fragment of truth, however bold, will satisfy us. Indeed, we know that the universe of truth is so interrelated that to know anything truly is to know all truly. At the end of man's search is the ideal of all the truth there is, in terms of which he judges all imperfect truth as indeed imperfect, and so not wholly satisfactory.

Then, there is no doubt whatever, is there, that we men, when we know ourselves, find that an inevitable part of our human struggle for life is the struggle for goodness. The desire is often forgotten; but deep in human nature it still persists, forever asserting itself, forever tormenting the human spirit with the sense of duty, however submerged by sin and error. All history is a struggle for righteousness, through many devious paths, through ever so many defeats that can never quite kill the longing for the good that is not, but that ought to be. Of it are born all prophets and their reforms; in its name, however mistaken, the millions have battled on fields of honor, in the forum, in their own hearts. For its sake, too, men have perished with a song on their lips. Blot out the search, and the chief theme of civilization is banished forever. And now again, *how much* goodness will satisfy the human spirit? How good must a man become rightfully to say, "I am now good enough; now ends my search"? Surely there is no limit here! And yet until the limit is reached, no goodness is fully good; it is partial, defective. At the end of the search

for the good is the goodness that has no lack, in terms of which we judge all imperfect goodness as indeed imperfect, and so not wholly satisfactory.

And the human struggle for life has been—shall I say inevitably?—a struggle for beauty, too. Has not the search for beauty been characteristic of man from the first crude commencement of his recorded life? Groping for its expression, even the lowest tribes of men instinctively adorn themselves. It has been said that the wearing of jewelry is the last relic of barbarism; but it has been better said that it is, rather, the first trace of civilization. Stronger and subtler grows this desire for the beautiful as the ages pass. More and more regions of life are brought under its sway as culture expands. Art is long, but it is sure, for it is the expression of man's fundamental demand for life in its beauty, that fashions mere stone into temples and statues, mere sounds into music and melodious speech, mere paint into pictures, and articulate thought into literature. The passionate search for beauty is as signal as the search for truth and goodness. And now again, *how much* beauty? Is there any limit to the dream? How beautiful does man, the creator, desire to make his temple, his painting, his poem, his song, his world? There is no final satisfaction for him short of the beauty that knows no defect, in terms of which we judge all that is imperfectly beautiful as indeed imperfect, and so not wholly satisfactory.

Every man desires these things in his heart, not as cold abstractions, but as personal possessions, as an intimate part of the struggle for his own life, as part of his very will to live. It is these things, if attained, that would fulfill the heights of his being, the ultimate vision of the self that he longs to become. These are the three sides of the one Ideal that beckons man's desire and is the key to his every strenuous endeavor. These things men utterly demand of life. By these things life is fashioned into the likeness of man's ultimate and unconquerable want. We have come at last to the final and unequivocal answer to the question concerning what kind of life the human desire for life involves. Man desires a life whose fulfillment would be life's perfection in its Beauty, in its Goodness, and in its Truth. Anything less than this foils the spirit's quest; to attain anything less than this is to attain what every man knows is short of the vision that makes even this less at all possible.

Yet, less than this man ever attains in life as we know it. And therein lies life's mockery, its futility. It is in view of the failure of man to achieve his dreams that a famous agnostic has said that "whether in mid-sea or 'mong the breakers of the farther shore, a wreck at last must mark the end of each and all." Our ideals are infinite; our lives are finite. This is man's paradox. The law of duty demands perfect goodness; the law of beauty demands its perfect vision become real; the law of

truth calls for all the truth; but what man ever came to the brink of the grave, even after the longest and most favorable of lives, with these things triumphantly attained? Any one who should presume that he had done so would receive our pity, if not our scorn.

Yes, man is indeed a paradox if his will to live is thus a will for endless ideals that demand immortal life, and if he is nevertheless finite, defeated ever by death. And some, otherwise so careful to avoid inconsistencies in the physical world, are content to leave man in just this monstrous contradiction. But to think thus is to fail to think. For reason cannot rest in a contradiction the least critical, even for a moment. *If man's imperative and unconquerable desire for life carries with it the inextricable desire for that which only the chance of immortal progress can give, then to conceive of life as rational is to conceive of it as triumphantly immortal.* If the laws of evolution actually arise from and are justified by the desire to live, immortality is just as assuredly justified by that same desire when its full meaning is made clear. The only legitimate doubt would arise through success in proving that on some other grounds equally reasonable immortality is impossible. But there is not a single reputable scientist of modern days that even pretends to put forward such a proof. As we have seen, science leaves it an absolutely open question. But now, at last, in our analysis of the

meaning of the human will to live, science's agnosticism is transcended by a reason that doggedly insists that we cannot rest in inconsistencies, and that we have only two choices, each perfectly plain; the choice of making the fundamental facts of life a hopeless contradiction; or of solving the contradiction by the one hypothesis that clears the problem, the hypothesis of immortality, which at once compels life to emerge into a coherence that satisfies an insistent reason, and which gives the human spirit the only faith that saves it from the defeat of all its valor.

The reasoning here advanced must not be confused with something that seems like it, but is very alien to it, namely, the pretty sentimentality that claims that one's immortality is a fact because one wishes it or desires it. This would involve the idiotic assumption that anything is true if anybody wants it to be true. It is not that because we do not like to die, therefore we shall not die. It is not that immortality is a "fond desire" or a "pleasing hope," as Addison puts it; or that we "startle at destruction." The struggle for existence, the desire for life, the will to live, presupposed by all biologic evolution, is not a mere wish, or a pleasing hope, or a fond desire. It is an impregnable *fact,* pleasing or not, that no one can defy. The argument for immortality here advanced is that this very will to live, when it becomes explicit in man, turns out to be a will that makes fundamental de-

mands upon life that can be no more gainsaid than the will to live itself. And this inalienable desire for life with definite characteristics involves immortality, just as it carries with it all the inevitable phenomena of human evolution. It is not that we want to be immortal; but that whether we want to or not, the fundamental fact of life, the will to live, when made logically explicit, demands immortality as a fact, or the will to live utterly defeats itself.

Emerson puts the matter precipitately when he exclaims, "Everything is prospective, and man is to live hereafter." Lord Bacon implies, somewhat obliquely, this same mastery of death by life when he says that "there is no passion in the mind of man so weak, but it mates and masters the fear of death. . . . Revenge triumphs over death; love slights it; honor aspireth to it; grief flieth to it." Tennyson, seeing the utter contradiction between death and life, between the senseless ending of all and the human task that knows no end, cries aloud with the fine scorn of a reason that will not abdicate to such a paradox:

> And he, shall he—
>
> Who loved, who suffered countless ills,
> Who battled for the True, the Just,—
> Be blown about the desert dust,
> Or sealed within the iron hills?
>
> No more?—A monster, then, a dream,
> A discord! Dragons of the prime
> That tear each other in their slime,
> Were mellow music, matched with him!

And Jesus, taking immortality as a matter of course, since as a matter of course it is involved in the least significant of life's spiritual ideals, does not feel the necessity of speaking much about what to him is a truism; only assuring those who sought his insight that "if it were *not* so, I would have told you."

This is the sum of the whole matter: If the ideals that give life a meaning are real, then immortality is real. Otherwise, Schopenhauer's conclusion is perfectly proper; the whole duty of man is to suppress the will to live. And that other philosophical pessimist, von Hartmann, is equally right in insisting that it were better if the world had never come to be, and that the final moral imperative for a reasonable man is to end it all as quickly as possible.

But men simply will not end it all. Each in his own way will go on struggling between birth and death for that Truth, that Beauty, and that Goodness, whose behests lie beyond the finite years. Knowing it or not knowing it, man's search is such that he can tolerate no last resting place. He is mocked by death, so death he mocks; for the infinite search is all he has and all he is. And forget not that it is not a matter of capricious choice, it is not a matter of temperament; it is a matter of cold logic. Cling to your ideals and you cling to immortality; abjure immortality and really mean your abjuration with all its logical involvings, and your ideals falter and fade and vanish; death has

already closed over you. But death will never claim or convince you; for never will you or can you part with what makes you what you are in your infinite significance.

VI

We must be very careful not to attempt to achieve more than we have a right to achieve by our premises; and yet we must be just as careful to claim the full significance of what we can attain by them. Some things that we would like to know about immortality we must regard as subject to mere speculation and guess; other things we may regard as logical certainties,—that is, once we have been led to the one certainty without which human life is a contradiction. What is plainly certain about the further character of the immortal life is whatever is logically necessary to fulfill the purposes that led us to believe in it.

Thus, we cannot lose our individuality in the immortal life, for its search is precisely a search of each individual to fulfill the goal of truth and goodness and beauty in himself. Immortality is no sea in which our souls are lost; for its very meaning as proved is to save the soul from such death; from such death as loses it in a grave of spirit, as well as from such death as resolves it dust to dust. Of this we shall say more in later chapters.

And immortality, if based upon the moral demand

for inexpugnable ideals, can never be conceived as merely that we continue forever; it is not merely everlasting continuance, but that infinitely greater thing, everlasting progress; this is its only reason for being; this it is or nothing at all. But wait,—is one to progress forever? Will one never reach the end of his journey? Are we doomed to a search that never finds? This were as much of a mockery as death! Mortal or immortal, then, we never achieve! Well, suppose this to be true, that, mortal or immortal, we never finally attain the goal. Which would you choose: the end of all, once and for all, at the funeral of your body; or the chance forever to grow more and more into the likeness of your ultimate dream, even though it be ever beyond you, with infinite triumphs for you to achieve between yourself as you now are and its adorable Perfection? You know what Lessing said so wisely once, that, if he were offered on the one hand truth, and on the other hand the search for truth, he would choose the latter. Lessing knew that, truly interpreted, man does not seek an end to his search, but the chance to seek forever,—to find more and more the glory of what he seeks. He is indeed finite; he shall never attain. Yet, he is indeed infinite, for his it shall be to be forever attaining. The glory of the perfect is to *be;* the glory of the imperfect is to *do.* Man is imperfect, and there is no last deed for him, nor can he even want to rest in quiescence forever. To be immortal is not to be "at rest"; such

rest as death gives is only relative. To be immortal is to be forever finding new and better things to do; it is

To see nothing anywhere but what you may reach it and pass it,
To conceive no time, however distant, but what you may reach it and pass it,
To look up or down no road but it stretches and waits for you, however long but it stretches and waits for you,
To see no being, not God's or any, but you also go thither.

No, death is not a slumber as we so often say; to die is rather to awake. As Jean Paul Richter writes, "When we die, we shall find we have not lost our dreams; we have only lost our sleep."

These things we may believe if we have a valorous faith in the logic of life and its meaning. Yet, to believe in immortality is not to have solved everything concerning it, any more than to believe in science is to solve all the problems of science. Nevertheless, there are many who, while believing in science with its incompleteness, rather absurdly insist that before they can believe in immortality they must know all about it to the minutest detail of speculative guess. They must know where the soul was before birth; how birth united it with a body; just what happens to the soul when death occurs; whether spiritual communication is possible; whether, in the life beyond this body, we shall know each other. These are, indeed, speculations that may well engage the reason and imagination of

those who care for them,—and who does not? But their settlement one way or another is fortunately not vital to belief in immortality as a working hypothesis of life. What is vital is that to which reason has led us; that to interpret this life consistently and logically is inevitably to come to the conclusion that its purposes imply the everlasting chance of individual progress toward the infinite goal, whose search makes man what he is.

And one thing more that illumines all the moral task is beyond speculation. Since the one pregnant thing in man's life is his will to live a certain sort of life that leads to specific ends whose meaning I have outlined; and since evolution presupposes this very will to live, even in its lowest forms, man must regard the evolutionary process and its laws as an issuance of this will on which it is based, rather than regard his will as subordinate to evolution. Emphatically, it is not man's duty to "adjust himself to his environment"; nay, not even his environment to himself; but to adjust both himself and his environment to his ideal of what both ought to be, according to the one Fact that gives both a meaning,—the Fact of the struggle for that existence that knows no last defeat and no last victory. And it is in this sense and in every sense that we live the immortal life *now*,—not merely after death. And it is in this sense that Thales, the first philosopher of Greece, could say so long ago, "Death does not differ at all from life."

VII

I am not at all sure how far these considerations are finally convincing to others. I shall be satisfied if, having proved that science does not and cannot deny immortality, I have given reasons that lead us to think further than the dogmatic denial or the shallow indifference or the unbased skepticism which is prevalent among many who never viewed the fundamental terms of this great problem. Say, if you please, that we have come not upon a certain proof, but a proof based upon an *if*. That is, let the situation remain this: *If* you believe in certain values, ideals, you *also* believe in immortality. I further hold that you do believe in these ideals of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness in spite of yourself. You reveal it constantly. Whatever you say, *when you live as you most approve, you live as though you were immortal.* For the practical effects of a positive disbelief in immortality would be far-reaching; it would not merely shorten your moral task, but change the very character of your task; that is, you would be compelled, if logical, to cast aside forever the ideals you actually live by. And I know that, whatever you say, you will not and cannot do this.

And, finally, if you still doubt; and, granting the fact that science leaves the question open, and, further, that immortality is in the least desirable, the final issue is simply how venturesome you are.

Suppose that to grasp at a faith in immortality is a leap in the dark. Well, as Fitz James Stephen says, "in all important transactions of life we have to take a leap in the dark. . . . If we decide to leave the riddles unanswered, that is a choice; if we waver in our answer, that, too, is a choice: but whatever choice we make, we make it at our peril. . . . We stand on a mountain pass in the midst of whirling snow and blinding mist, through which we get glimpses now and then of paths which may be deceptive. If we stand still we shall be frozen to death. If we take the wrong road we shall be dashed to pieces. We do not certainly know whether there is any right one. What must we do? 'Be strong and of good courage.' Act for the best, hope for the best, and take what comes. . . . If death ends all, we cannot meet death better." [3]

All nature is thus venturesome, as one of the conditions of living:

Never quailed the swallow over sea and wilds to chase the summer;
Seeds that prisoned are, dream of and find the daylight;
The creature river-born, unassailed by doubt, seeks the wide ocean.

Shall you be less than these? You, whose desires are not blind as are the desires of these, but illumined by a reason that defines and strengthens? Is it not as Poe quotes from Joseph Glanvill: "Man doth not yield himself to the angels, nor unto death

[3] Quoted by William James, *The Will to Believe*, p. 31.

utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will"?

Still, there may be some who will always think that a man can actually throw away the infinite desires that give life meaning and that demand immortal progress. To such, if such there be, immortality is then not only unnecessary, but impossible as a belief,—and impossible as an opportunity and fact. For such, our argument can have no worth. If immortal purposes involve immortal life, just as truly does immortal life involve immortal purposes. For such as do not see this supreme truth, Matthew Arnold utters this grim remonstrance, one of the most eloquent in meditative literature:

> No, no! the energy of life may be
> Kept on after the grave, but not begun;
> And he who flagg'd not in the earthly strife,
> From strength to strength advancing—only he,
> His soul well-knit, and all his battles won,
> Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MODERN AND HIS GOD

Recent literature shows a growing revival of interest in a question which is one of the oldest that ever challenged human reason. Is there a God? If so, what sort of God is He? This gravid question always intrudes itself at times of great crises. It was to be expected that, face to face with such a tragedy as the world has lately experienced, the question would once more assert itself as a matter of serious significance. For a world-crisis generates the need of a world-view. And it happens that no world-view is complete without disposing in some way of the problem of God.

I

The educated man who has freed himself from the set traditions of cults is likely to be rather cautious concerning any definite deliverance on the question. Intellectually, he views the whole problem somewhat askance. Modern science has made the cultured man's attitude difficult. In the first place, many suspect that science has quite effectually disproved God. Others, not willing to go this far, feel that science still leaves room for God,—in an attenuated

sense. But the great majority of thoughtful minds are divided into two classes; those, on the one hand, whom science has convinced that the question is beyond the limits of finite knowledge, and who feel that it is idle and even impious to attempt to solve it; and those, on the other hand, who, although still clinging to the enlightenment of science, manage to enclose their religious lives away from their scientific interests, and in that unworldly sphere maintain their loyalty to ancient faiths and spiritual needs.

It is not our concern here to discuss the problem of God from the standpoint of religion, or even from the standpoint of mere theory. Here, as elsewhere, we are concerned with the great verities only as they are inseparably related to men's practical interests, —only as truths to live by. The question with which we are face to face is whether a God is actually necessary to civilization when it is considered as a moral enterprise. The further question of His existence then becomes part of an intensely practical project, beyond all mere sentiment and abstract speculation.

It seems clear that if the attitude of the modern mind toward the problem of God is so largely influenced by modern science, our first business is to find out just what science really has to say. Does science disprove God? Or, if not, does it give us a God in harmony with its discoveries? Or does science reveal to us that the question is insoluble? Or, does science leave the matter an open question?

Before one can intelligently answer these queries, it is essential to state exactly what we intend to mean when we use the word "God." For the word "God" can mean countless things. Not only the ancient Pantheon, but the modern as well, overflows with gods. We cannot as much as catalogue them here, much less attempt to find science's attitude toward every one of them. I shall choose to mean by "God" what seems to me to be at the basis of most of the modern conceptions that go by that name. Amid all the differences that divide us into sects and religions, this much is in common,—that when we mention "God" we refer to a perfect being; perfect in the sense of possessing perfect knowledge, perfect power, and perfect goodness or holiness, yes, and perfect beauty, if such there be. I have another reason for defining God in this way for the purposes of our inquiry; the idea of God must mean at least these things in order to be of any moral value whatever. For there are two main ways in which an idea of God becomes of moral use; first, as a moral ideal toward which we may strive; and second, if not this, at least as a power that in some way guarantees the final triumph of righteousness. If God is a moral ideal, He must be thought of as possessing the qualities of moral perfection; perfection in knowledge, in goodness, in all that we found to make the immortal ideal of a perfect self; if, on the other hand, He is to be thought of as a moral guarantee, again He must in some way involve the same indispensable

moral characteristics, as the very source of the moral order that requires them. No being save one that means reason, goodness, beauty, and power in their perfection can guarantee the triumph of such things in our world.

II

When one asks what is the attitude of modern science toward such a conception of God, one is reasonably certain that science has nowhere discovered any such being. Not that modern science is atheistic; no, several kinds of gods have been recently offered us as being perfectly consistent with scientific presuppositions, and have at least been tolerated by many scientists. Most of these various conceptions may be reduced to two main types: first, those that make a God out of that ultimate reality said to be beyond scientific knowledge, the reality called the Unknowable; and second, those that make a God out of the Totality of Things, known and unknown.

No one can possibly deny that there are such realities. Doubtless there is an absolute reality beyond science's limits of inquiry that is Unknowable to science; doubtless, too, all that exists must be thought of as a Totality of Things. But why call either reality by the name of "God"? There are reasons, of course. It has been customary to think of God as the supreme reality in the universe, so it is natural to name one of these realities "God"

if it is regarded as the most important thing in the world. Another reason is this; science, having proved the absurdity of many of the traditional ideas of God, has been earnestly besought for something more than a destructive criticism of religion. And the best science can do is to take its largest concepts and label them "God," in answer to popular demand. Speaking accurately, it is not in the main the scientists themselves who have done this, but those generalizers who have gone beyond the province acknowledged by any science, and who have drawn inferences which, while not within the limits of strictly scientific inquiry, are at least such that science cannot contradict them,—which is more than can be said of some theologies.

Neither God as the mere Unknowable, nor God as the Totality of Things has aroused much enthusiasm among men. Scant religious comfort has come from them, and they will be found upon examination to possess little moral value. Whenever men have been deeply impressed by such ideas of God, something has been quite unconsciously added to these conceptions, which, moreover, science in no way warrants. The cry of a soul in dire despair "O my God!" can scarcely be translated into "O my Unknowable!" or "O my Totality of Things!" without a suspicion of absurdity. But leaving the religious side of the matter alone—and I am not here concerned with it—these conceptions of God cannot have the least moral use. For instance, neither of

them can become the ideal of moral aspiration. No one seeks to become the Unknowable, or like it; or the Totality of Things, or anything similar to it. Nor can they be said to be of that other moral use, the guarantee of the triumph of righteousness. For plainly, neither of these gods can be said to be even good. The goodness of the Unknowable is surely as unknowable as anything else about it; and concerning the goodness of the Totality of Things science can say nothing, for as has been made plain, it deals ever with the question of what things *are*, not with ideals of goodness, or with what things *ought* to be. Science cannot even make a God out of Human Progress, as some have tried to do; for science knows nothing of progress, but only of change, concerning which, just as science, it can make no moral judgments whatever. Any one who knows the self-acknowledged limits of science knows this.

But while it is certain that science, within the limits of its search, discovers no reality that can truly be called "God" in the sense in which we have defined Him, science just as certainly gives not a shred of evidence to disprove such a reality. The most that can be said by science is that, within its field, it has "no use for that hypothesis." Such a saying once shocked religious people, who thought it the same as a denial of God. But such an attitude does not deny God, any more than a bridge-builder denies mental states merely because he has no use

in his business for the hypotheses of experimental psychology. Truly now, just which science is it that deals with the problem of God? Not biology, surely; not chemistry; not physics; not even psychology, save as the idea of God is a mental state. The problem is entirely outside the realm of every particular science. Why, science does not deal with the idea of Perfection at all! It does presuppose the ideal of completeness in the sense of a universe completely rational,—that is, causally interrelated. But no science actually finds even such completeness anywhere, nor does the presupposition of it mean moral perfection, although it does not exclude it. The only basis on which science can be said to disprove God is the gratuitous assumption that whatever science does not or cannot prove is thereby disproved! It is not the custom of scientists themselves to go this far. The critical attitude of the modern scientist is that while science does not prove God, neither does it disprove Him; nor does it even disprove the possibility of proof outside the limits of science, provided that no assured scientific truth is thereby contradicted. The cautious scientist must ever answer: "Just as a scientist, I am perfectly willing to confess that I do not know whether there is a God. But as a scientist, I do not deny Him. The question is simply not within my realm. All that I insist upon as a scientist is that you do not foist upon me a God that is inconsistent with what science must regard as verifiable facts and laws."

Hence, as a matter of fact, science does not disprove God, but leaves the question utterly open, just as it does the question of immortality. One reason why there is a popular impression otherwise, even to the belief that science is atheistic, is that some of the traditional ideas of God have unfortunately carried with them notions that later scientific discovery flatly contradicted. Some of the older theologies confidently offered as proofs for God considerations that have had to be refuted and abandoned by every one who accepts the truths of modern science. But to prove that some proofs of God are fallacious, and to disprove God, are two very different things. There may be other more critical proofs that do not contradict science. There may be new and better reasons that will rescue this ancient faith.

Another reason why scientists have been pardonably impatient with some of the conceptions of God is that so many thinkers have loosely used them to explain everything we do not know, instead of seeking scientific explanations. This is easy, but it leaves our ignorance precisely where it was. Why war? God. Why cholera? God. The nature of life and death? God. To use God as a magic solvent for all problems, a panacea for every intellectual unrest, strikes a scientific man as the height of intellectual laziness and absurdity, and as an attitude that makes the resolute progress of truth impossible. Scientific impatience with such uses of the idea of

God has often led unreflecting people hastily to look upon science as Godless.

III

Approaching the problem of God, then, we must beware of these dangers, or our solution will not be consistent with the modern temper and will mean nothing to a truly modern mind. Above all, while fully conscious of the limits of science, we must not be content with a conception of God which, while not contradicting science, still leaves science out. After all, the universe is one; and any moral enterprise, even that of proving or seeking God, that does not relate itself to the stupendous meanings of scientific discovery is worse than useless.

Is there a God? A being perfect in truth, in goodness, in beauty, and in power?

I suppose there is no doubt in anybody's mind that we have at least an *idea* of such a perfect being. Such an idea holds the meaning of all the ideals we strive for, once carried to their highest terms. That there is no finite limit that any man is willing to set to his search for knowledge, or goodness, or beauty, or power, without contradicting all that he seeks and does, has already appeared in our discussion concerning immortality. Whatever one may say about the existence of God, such perfection as He is thought to be exists as an ideal, anyway. I do not at all mean that any one has a Perfect Idea

in his mind, but only that he has an idea—yes, an ideal—of the Perfect, however imperfect the idea itself may be. Indeed, grant that our ideals of perfection are themselves imperfect, we can know this only because we can judge them in the light of the perfection that we seek and of which, therefore, we must have some idea. Take the ideal of perfect knowledge, for an instance. No one knows what perfect knowledge would be like; but it is, nevertheless, the infinite goal of all our search for truth. If we are certain that our knowledge grows from year to year, from age to age, it can be only because we know growth in knowledge when we see it; but such growth, such progress toward the goal, can be tested and made sure only through the possession by man's spirit of the ideal of the goal of knowledge itself, a knowledge that is ideally complete and knows no errors; in terms of which all progress in truth is judged and all errors are rectified. If man does that miraculous thing, corrects his own errors, guides and judges his own progress in the search for truth, he must verily have within him the standard of truth, an imperfect idea of some of the characteristics of the complete truth that he seeks. Or, his search is meaningless. Should science deny this, its very denial would be made possible only by assuming the very thing it denies; namely, that we possess some ideal of perfect truth, in terms of which all denials of error, including even this, are made. So perfect truth is real as an ideal at any rate.

So is perfect goodness. All moral progress is known to be progress only because we think of it as approximating nearer and nearer to an ever-receding goal of the goodness that is perfect. Without some idea of this perfect goodness, we could not talk of progress toward it at all. This goodness that will suffer no defeat speaks to us through conscience, even when conscience is mistaken; and through it conscience is educated and refined. It speaks to us through every moral sacrifice, all retracing of steps for the sake of that which is not yet and which, nevertheless, imperatively rules all that we are and hope to be. Whether there be a good God or not, perfect goodness itself exists as an ideal beyond a peradventure. And the same may be said of all else that we fundamentally seek, such as the beauty that will never let us rest, and the power our weakness aspires to with all its strength.

We come then to this: What I have defined as God we actually seek as an ideal,—whether we care to call it God or not. We seek Something of perfect goodness, truth, beauty, and power. To say that man will never reach a place where, short of completeness, he can abandon his search and say, "It is done," is to reveal of what sort his ideal is. Any denial of it is verbal; his activities and sacrifices ceaselessly affirm it in spite of all that he can say.

Now, this Something that we seek is that which would, if once attained, completely realize ourselves,

fulfill ourselves, make ourselves whole, satisfy our every yearning to become that which we are not. That is, deeply seen, the moral ideal is not merely something which you wish to possess as something external to you, but it is something that you wish to *become*. Unless growth in truth or goodness is in the last resort *your* growth, whatever else it is, it is meaningless. The ideal is yourself and every man carried to his highest terms. In other words, being imperfect persons, all of us, we seek an ideal which, when interpreted, is the conception of what it would be to be a Perfect Person. For a person to seek an impersonal ideal is a contradiction. It is moral suicide. To seek ideals is to seek nothing else than self-fulfillment,—which may as much as you please involve the fulfillment of others, too, but must not annihilate you, or your search is *your* search no longer. We persons, then, seek to fulfill ourselves in an ideal of a Perfect Person, perfect in all the ways in which we seek completeness.

But to prove that we actually possess an ideal of the Perfect Person is not yet to prove God, unless we are among those who are satisfied with thinking of God as a mere ideal. Some have been so satisfied. And if there were actually no other sense in which God is real, even then we would possess something of infinite value, an ultimately priceless thing, a test and transformer of civilization, to which, even if only a thought in the mind, we could exclaim with every aspiration of the human spirit,

O thou immortal deity,
Whose throne is in the depth of human thought.

Yet, most people aspire further. They cannot be content to think of God as finally reduced to only "my ideal." Nay, that were but the shadow of God; He vanishes into nought, a fantasy, a dream. And it may be well to pause here long enough to point out that even the God we have thus far reached is more—far more—than just "*my* ideal." It is my ideal in the sense that it is in me; but it would be much more correct to say that even as an idea it possesses me more than I possess it. Indeed, in a very real sense, it is independent of me and of what I think. Or, if you wish, its significance is not that I think it, but that I *have* to think it; not that I live in terms of it, but that I cannot avoid doing so. In this sense, it is more than I and independent of me. For instance, the ideal of truth is not merely my private property or yours. Before we were born, truth's laws of logic were; after we die, they still shall be. I do not capriciously make the ideal of logic; and I cannot unmake it, any more than I can unmake a mathematical axiom. The ideal of perfection always was and always will be wherever there is a mind. It is the one eternal thing that no mind can deny without denying itself. Wherever ideas are, there it is. "But if God is not thus reduced to merely *my* ideal, at any rate He is reduced to merely *an* ideal or, at best, *the* ideal." Suppose this were

the end of the story. What a wonderful thing the belief in God still would be! How loyalty to Him would transform life! How conviction in the reality of God, even if only as a "far off divine event toward which the whole creation moves," would transfigure the universe! The Ideal of all we are and hope to be can be thought of as no shadow; it is the central reality. Even if we could induce men to believe in God only in so far, morals would be just so far saved, moral confidence would live again, and moral heroism be made almost reasonable,—not the mere fanaticism of dreamers and of fools.

IV

Still, the insistent question intrudes itself. Granted that God is real at least as an ideal, with the infinite power over us men that such an ideal has, is He real in the further sense usually demanded by men when they demand a proof of God? In other words, *Is God real in the same sense that you and I are real?* For there is no question that I am real in a further sense than in being a mere idea in somebody's mind. Socrates may be a moral ideal for his admirers; but we all know that he is something more. Is God this something more, even as Socrates, even as you and I? This is the question that we must now answer in a straightforward way, without appeal to our mere feelings, and without such logical subtleties as savor of evasion.

It happens that the answer to this question comes with all definiteness as soon as we make clear what the mere ideal called God means in its utter fullness. That is, adequately to show what this ideal of the Perfect truly means is suddenly to come upon the all-significant fact that it is necessarily more than a mere ideal; that it is indeed something real, even as I am real. Upon this adventure let us cast our fortunes and see what we find.

In regarding the nature of the moral ideal very carefully, three great facts about it will become plain. We shall name these facts first, and explain them afterwards. The first is that the ideal of the Perfect, when carefully examined, proves to be not merely a goal at the end of a search, but is a goal of such a nature that it somehow includes the search itself. The second is that the moral ideal somehow includes also the great world of nature in which we live and which, at first sight, seems so indifferent and even unfavorable to man's moral purposes. And the third fact is that the Perfection you and I individually seek includes also the perfection of our fellows, even as their search includes yours and mine; that is, the moral ideal is inevitably social. Later, it will be seen that upon proving just these things the proof for God rests. I now proceed briefly to give reasons for them one by one.

First, then, the ideal of the Perfect is not merely a goal at the end of a search, but includes the search itself. This looks like a logical subtlety, but it is

harmless. When understood, common sense will be found to sanction it, as well as consistent reason. Nobody, surely, evaluates a human life by what it is during its final moment before death, as if the goal of moral endeavor were just that last moment, thought of as a goal for the sake of which all the rest of life was lived. How insignificant that last moment is likely to be, even in the lives of great men! No, we evaluate a life in terms of the whole life as it was lived from first to last. The goal of our life's striving is to make our whole life after the pattern of the ideal, not merely the last moment of it. Thus it is that in our moral struggles we never can leave out our past; if it is wrong, we must atone for it by whatever will set it right when seen as a whole. This is, indeed, the meaning of our hours of remorse, our deeds of repentance, our conscientious endeavors to undo the things we have done wrongly by deeds that do not forget them, but that transcend them and transfigure them. This is true even of a finite life that ends with death. How infinitely true of the immortal life! For such a life there can be no last deed, no goal at which we "arrive" and, arriving, abide. No, it is an infinite search, growing more and more towards the ideal that forever leads forward, and that commands as part of its behest that every deed, even the humblest, be counted in making up life's immortal balance, even mistakes and sins, lifted into a new reality by the deeds that rectify them and so change their

meaning in the infinite total. Yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow all belong to the infinite life we build and seek,—not at all is that life a mere vanishing point postponed to infinite futures! Life is dynamic, not static; so is the moral ideal. The Perfect is the perfection of all the deeds that make up our striving when seen as a whole, not the end and surcease of them.

Second, the moral ideal somehow includes the great world of nature in which we live. By this I mean that the natural order is ultimately to be thought of as a moral order; an order that is consonant with man's own moral ideal,—not a mere mechanism, utterly indifferent to man's search for the Perfect. At first sight, nothing seems further from the facts. Nature thwarts man at every turn. It seems to be absolutely indifferent to his moral enterprises. The rain falls upon the just and the unjust; indeed, the just often miss it when they most want it, and the unjust get it without even praying for it. Is it not a matter of ancient observation that "many are the afflictions of the righteous," and that "the wicked flourish like a green bay tree"?

But there is another fact not to be forgotten. If nature thwarts man, man overcomes nature and shapes it to his uses, so that it thwarts him less and less. This is the story of civilization and its inner meaning,—the shaping of nature to man's ideals; forests into cities, stones into temples, wildernesses into highways, colors into paintings, sounds

into music and the articulate dreams of literature. Out of recalcitrant dust, a sword of flame to storm the heights! Science gives us her gift, the laws of nature; but they would be a worthless gift if they were not such that we could use them in the service of progress toward that Perfect which we restlessly and forever seek. Science would not be tolerated for one moment if it were not for this usefulness. It cannot exist for the sake of mere intellectual curiosity. Mere intellectual curiosity is an abstraction that expires if left to itself; for man is not only an intellect, but a will and a desire; and all things must serve this or fail. And to insist that nature must be interpreted in terms of man's will does not make man the egoistic center of nature, any more than to insist that it be interpreted in terms of his reason, as we do not hesitate to do, and as science is forever doing. Nature must be interpreted in terms of man's will, too, or man will abandon nature,—which he cannot do since it is part of his very life. Yes, part of his life, and so part of his ideal. This is the meaning of our resolute and successful attempt to master nature, even to its infinitude. Even to its infinitude, for

This day before dawn I ascended a hill and look'd at the crowded heaven,
And I said to my spirit *When we become the enfolders of those orbs, and the pleasure and knowledge of every thing in them, shall we be fill'd and satisfied then?*
And my spirit said *No, we but level that lift to pass and continue beyond.*

To interpret nature thus morally does not contradict or interfere with or change a single scientific law. Nor does it mean that we insist that science shall interpret the world one whit otherwise than it does. For example, one shall not insist that the biologist as such should think that the survival of the fittest means in the long run the survival of the morally best; although one shall hold that this is so. It does no violence whatever to any scientific law to interpret the life of nature from the standpoint of the moral ideal, the ultimate standpoint that gives meaning to everything man thinks and does, including the achievement of scientific truth. The scientific laws of digestion are not moral in themselves; but they are among the natural means for living a life that rationally is moral. Science deals, if you please, with the structure of the world-life; morals with its function; science with its body; morals with its soul.

The natural order must be ultimately moral, or moral faith is in vain and impossible. For the very materials of man's moral task are found in nature; and if nature be not such as he can, through struggle, shape to his uses, his task is in vain. But if his task is in vain, its futility means a contradiction to the very essence of man, which resides, as we have seen in the moral search, which, if contradicted, shatters the world from the standpoint of a complete logical consistency. We must believe that, in the long run, nature is for us, not against us, or

we throw away our ideals; and we simply cannot do that. So nature is part of the power that makes for righteousness. Whatever our abstractly intellectual beliefs about it, in times of crises, when our wills assert themselves in their ultimate nakedness, we make this inalienable demand. When, at such times, nature seems perversely counter to the good, our loyalties still live on in the faith of the common saying that nature knows "best"; otherwise we perish. In *Light,* a novel by Barbusse, it is said of a workingman's wife that "she doesn't believe in God."

"Ah," says a mother standing by, "that's because she has no children."

"Yes, she has got two."

"Then," says the poor woman, "it's because they've never been ill."

This is not mere sentiment. It is a profound philosophical observation. We must believe that even in nature all things work together for good.

The third fact about the Perfection that you and I seek is that it includes the perfection of our fellows, even as their search includes yours and mine; that is, the moral ideal is inevitably social. To prove this is merely to prove that you and I are social by nature, which means, psychologically, that I possess as a fundamental and ineradicable part of me what Mill called "a feeling of unity with my fellow creatures"; or, metaphysically, that I cannot fully define my own being save in terms of the being of others; or, morally, that my ultimate ideal reveals itself as

not a life isolated from all, but a life that includes the good of everybody. This truth has often been regarded as the very heart of morality. It has even been doubted that there would be any such thing as morality left for an absolutely isolated human being. Our supreme virtues are social because our larger self is one that can leave no fellow self whatever outside the circle of our ultimate regard. The individual progresses through society, and society through the individual. The moral enterprise is social through and through, because we are inherently social through and through. Or, if you please, your search and my search and the search of all the rest of us, is a search for an ideal common to us all. We each seek the same Perfection, each in his own way; for, surely, there can be only one Perfect. And if the goal is the same for all, then not only all my deeds, but yours too, and those of every one of the infinite number of souls that seek the Ideal are parts of the same great search that includes us every one. And this is what links our lives; we each seek the same, each in his own way; yet for each to value as priceless his own search means to value as priceless the search of all the rest, of which his own is but a part,—yes, which his own must include to be complete.

Such, then, are three fundamental characteristics of the moral ideal when it is made more explicit. We come to this, then: *The Perfection that we seek is the infinite series of our deeds, including all of nature*

and the lives of all our fellows. But see at what we have arrived! We suddenly perceive the fact that if we grant what has been said, *the moral ideal is nothing less than that Life which is the Total Universe in its infinite completeness.* Little by little the ideal of Perfection has demanded all time, all nature, all lives, and finally that infinite completeness which is the totality of things. But this "totality of things" suddenly emerges as something more than that God which science gave us under that phrase. It is no longer, rightly interpreted, a mere aggregate of facts, or even a mere mechanistic organization of facts, but it is a moral order, a Life, realizing itself through infinite deeds through infinite time. And behold, this Life universal, just because it is our ideal, is ourselves, each of us, carried to our utter fulfillment. Further, such a Life is personal, if we are personal; for the essence of the moral personality of each of us is to have and to be just such a purpose that realizes itself immortally. We found God to exist at least as the Ideal of Perfection, of the Perfect Person; but this very ideal, upon careful analysis, turns out to be something more than a mere ideal; it is none other than the totality of things, whose meaning and life we each seek! But now, surely this totality of things is real; even science accepts that. *Then, just as surely and triumphantly is God real, for He is this very Totality, regarded as a Life.* He is as real as I am real, for if He, the universal Life,

is not real, then I, who am real only in terms of exactly that, fall into nothingness. If I am real, so is He; if I were not real, He could not be, for it is part of His reality to be that perfect life that I immortally seek and find. Or, if God is not real, my search is not real. But it is. I accept God or abandon my search, since it is Him I seek! And I will not abandon my search, for this were my death.

Of a verity, God is even more real than you and I, if one means by "you and I" what we are here and now, the poor selves we actually are at this moment. Even common sense recognizes that the actual self you now are is not your whole reality; it is not what you speak of when you speak of yourself in your full meaning. Yourself as you are actually, as you are up to date, is only part of that larger self which belongs to you, the self that includes all your future as well as all your past. Indeed, the future is rightly said to be already *your* future; it is a veritable part of you, of your career, which up to now is only begun, but which certainly belongs to you. Yes, that larger self of yours is more really you than the fleeting, partial self that you now are; you will tolerate or understand your partial self at all only as you relate it to the self that you yet shall be. But this larger self that is more real than the self you are now is the Ideal in its fullness,—it is God. He is more real than you are now, even as your complete self is more truly you than the poor self that you are to-day,

with your infinite to-morrows all forgotten and unclaimed. Even for science, the *real* is more than the *actual*,—that which is up-to-date. Science predicts with all confidence the event that is not yet actual, as part of its real world. For science, even the events of the future are as inexorably real as those of the past; the problem is not to decide if such events are real, but merely to discover what they are.

V

Such is one of the highways of reason that lead to God. Like the proof for immortality, it is a proof as thoroughly cogent as science's proof for her own widely accepted hypotheses, which are, nevertheless, regarded as universal laws; laws which it does not occur to us to question, because to question them would be to question the very being of science itself. A hypothesis proved because it is necessary to make life's search consistently possible is just as certain as any hypothesis deemed proved because it makes possible the special enterprise of life called science. Indeed, the search of science is justified only by its service to this larger search that is the heart of man's life, the soul of his moral being.

Nor may it be said that this proof for God is merely a moral proof, in the sense that it is not also an intellectual proof, such as are the proofs

of science. If men would only realize that our moral and intellectual interests are not two separate worlds! For if one is arguing from facts, then the moral ideal is just as much an immutable fact of man's nature as any other fact, such as a star, or a geologic stratum; and all other facts must be made rationally consistent with it, if it can be done with no shadow of contradiction to scientific laws.

Moreover, the proof for God offered here is not to be confused with certain proofs that have been quite current in the past, but have lost the confidence of the modern mind. It must not be confused with the ancient argument, made famous by Anselm, that God exists because the very idea of God's perfection can leave nothing out of God and so must include His existence. Our argument is not merely an argument from the nature of the idea of God to the fact that He exists, although it is at least this; but it is, most truly seen, an argument from the irrefutable facts of the moral life to the equally irrefutable fact of God. We face the facts; and the supreme Fact of all is the Totality of all Facts. And all the facts, including the central facts of man's moral nature, demand that we interpret this Totality of all Facts, this supreme Fact, as a moral order, as a self-realizing purpose fulfilling itself, and, so, as a Person, identical with the moral ideal that alone makes the life of us men real.

Nor is this proof of God to be confused with the old and most often fallacious attempts to prove

God from nature. This argument has been a favorite one, on which many a man has pinned his faith only to find later that nature itself reveals no Perfect Person. Nature just by itself gives us no moral order; she gives us a series of changes, which in themselves may be equally for better or worse; the truth is, we must find a way to interpret nature in terms of God before we can interpret God in terms of nature. Remain within the physical nature that science deals with, and no shred of evidence for God is found. Science is right here. Lucretius, admitting only a universe of matter,

> dropped his plummet down the broad
> Deep universe, and said, "No God!"

And within his presuppositions, he was right. Nature is bad or good according to one's viewpoint; it is the viewpoint itself that must be proved. Where in all nature does one find perfect rationality, or perfect goodness? One reads these things into nature, not out of nature. One comes to nature with these faiths in his heart. What a man sees of God in nature is the indirect reflection of Him through the man. But when nature is once seen thus, nature is most eloquent. If Lucretius had only dropped his plummet into the human soul! Man is a fact; in the study of this fact the moral order and God are logically found. It is an opprobrious accusation that man created God in his own image; yet, in a sense, man is the logical creator

of God in so far as God is logically implied in man's own being; if man ceased God would not be. This is what Socrates meant when he said before his accusers, "I do believe that there are gods, and in a far higher sense than any of my accusers do." For they relied upon the traditionally external proofs; but Socrates' proof was found in the mandate of the Delphic oracle, "Know Thyself." It is in this central fact, in terms of whose reason and will nature must ever be ultimately interpreted, that God is found. Within first; without afterwards.

> Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.

So close that Emerson, knowing that we are part of that moral order which is His life, could well challenge the logician thus:

> Draw, if thou canst, the mystic line
> Severing rightly his from thine,
> Which is human, which divine.

It is one of the traditional sayings of the Nazarene that "if thou hast seen thy brother, thou hast seen thy God." Even in the common man, the infinite moral order is revealed. Those who see beneath his mere appearance, those whom we call the seers, have ever known this. How the poets glorify the common man! To write his drama at all truly is ever to make him a member of that moral order whose infinite urge is the source of all tragedy.

For the spirit of tragedy is the theme of moral doom, the annihilation of ideals; but while, on the stage, the tragedy is final, in life as men live it the tragic doom is ever transcended; it is only an episode; there are infinite acts to come. As a great dramatic poet, Browning, puts it:

> Man is hurled
> From change to change unceasingly,
> His soul's wings never furled.

VI

Unless the conception of God that has now revealed itself as the end of our quest is also the God that our Occidental consciousness really seeks; unless this conception satisfies its intelligence and its moral criticism, our proof of God is not of much practical value. But I now maintain that the conception at which we have arrived includes all the essential demands of religions modernly prevalent. For instance, the Christian consciousness, too, insists that God is to be identified with the supreme moral ideal; concerning whom, therefore, the chief moral imperative is, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." That He is an ideal in my own image as I am in His image, is a thought that thrills the rhapsody of St. John when he exclaims, beholding the nature and goal of the struggle toward the completed Life,

"Beloved, now are we all the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." With Christianity, we have found that the superlative law of God is the law of love, not of force, since He rules all by being the Ideal of all, which, lifted up, shall "draw all men unto Him," through the love they bear toward that Perfect which is their ultimate desire. Christianity joins too with our moral reason in insisting that the divine life shall include nature; that not a sparrow's fall but is included in His meanings; that the natural body is the very "temple of the holy spirit," not to be abnegated, but transfigured; that the moral law is so regnant over natural law with its apparent indifferences that, at the last, "all things work together for good" for those who interpret all things through the Ideal,—love for which is their supreme loyalty. Christianity, too, is certain that the moral goal is social; it is a "kingdom" that includes all our fellows, the veritable "Kingdom of God." And, finally, if the Christian conception is of a personal God, symbolized most intimately by the term of Father, so also the conception to which we have come is personal, as has been abundantly shown. Even reason as well as feeling has led us to the great Comrade, away from that infinite loneliness that smites us if God is a mere ideal, a mere shadow or projection of the self. A lofty selfishness were that, it is true;

but it satisfies at the last neither reason, nor the unselfish love that demands that the object of its affection shall not be a vision only, but a reality, a veritable Other, who never forsakes, in whose life we share, and whose ever-present being gives us confidence to transcend all our defeats. No, this God we have found is no strange and alien God. It is the God the modern world has found itself seeking in its most conspicuous moments of religious awareness, if haply it might feel after Him and find Him.

VII

But amid so much that takes us into the regions of theory, we are apt to forget why we set out to solve the problem of God. It was for no religious purpose primarily, and for no sentimental reason at all,—not even for the sake of satisfying our intellectual curiosity, however pardonable. It was for one reason alone, to discover if God is necessary to make a moral order possible, and if so, in what sense. It has sufficiently appeared, long before coming upon our present problem, that morals cannot get along without a moral ideal; that moral confidence, moreover, means faith in the guarantee of the ultimate triumph of righteousness. It now appears that logic inevitably leads us to identify these requisites with the conception of God, whose existence a critical reason makes supremely real.

A moral ideal and the guarantee of the victory of the Good,—one of these two moral values we said God must have to be of moral worth. He has them both. He is the ideal; and He guarantees right's triumph because His eternal reality *is* that triumph, and because He insures it by His everlasting presence in human consciousness as the idea of the Perfect, through which wrong is forever criticized, and rebuked, and overcome. Again, in all this no fact or law of science has been impugned; nature is not cast aside or obscured, but given a new meaning that increases the worth of natural science immeasurably.

The belief in God thus turns out to be one of the indispensable bases for a vigorous moral confidence, along with the belief in immortality. Indeed, truly seen, moral progress, since it is progress toward the Perfect, means nothing more or less than progress in the living knowledge of God. Thus, the moral life and the religious life finally coincide. It is the morally pure in heart that shall see God. It is indeed true that, as the pietists used to say, "mere morals will not save you," for mere morals never can persist by themselves; logically carried out, mere morals lead to the very center of the religious verity and to the soul of its aspiration. Science is one of the most indispensable parts of this moral progress—this progress in the knowledge of God—for if the moral consciousness gives us the end of the human struggle, science, by ordering and

conquering nature, gives us the means. This moral evaluation of science instead of detracting from its importance in civilization, immeasurably magnifies its task, lifting it from the plane of mere rational curiosity to that of an invaluable instrument of human advancement.

I suspect that long before this, an apprehension has been growing in the reader's mind. I can imagine him saying: "Suppose we admit the God you think you have proved; you have given us a God that is the supreme fact in the world; but have you not attributed to God such supremacy that mere man is reduced to nought, so that he is left with no free will of his own, since, at the last, he has been interpreted as only part of a universal Will that cannot be gainsaid? You sought a God in the interests of morals; but in proving God, you have destroyed all morals if you have, as it seems, made man merely an inextricable part of Him, with no individual freedom, and so with no individual responsibility. Why should we struggle, if all is to be right in the end anyway, since, as you say, God's will cannot but prevail?"

This question is important. Undoubtedly, the conception to which we have been led gives God a power that is infinite. He is not only the goal of all things, but the inclusive reality pervading all things. He logically creates their very being and every minim of their meaning. We have lifted God from the world of shadows to the world of reality;

but, in so doing, have we not reduced man himself from a reality to a phantom, so that

> We are no other than a moving row
> Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go
> Round with this Sun-illumin'd Lantern held
> In Midnight by the Master of the Show;
>
> Impotent Pieces of the Game He plays
> Upon this Checker-board of Nights and Days;
> Hither and thither moves, and checks, and slays,
> And one by one back in the Closet lays.

If we have reached a God like this, all our proof of Him is worse than vanity. But have we done this? Unless man is more than a puppet in God's hands, the master of his fate, he has no moral responsibility, no genuine moral struggle, no real moral victories, and no moral faith,—save the passive faith that yields its will and waits, in the abject quiescence of a spirit cowed and driven, and ultimately lost in an Absolute that absorbs him and nullifies him.

We must face this difficulty resolutely. In doing so, there will emerge with still more clarity what God and man both are in their final significance.

CHAPTER IX

ARE WE MASTERS OF OUR FATES?

Western civilization proclaims freedom for men. This freedom is often considered the supreme test of the valiant worth of our democratic institutions. What this vaunted freedom means to the average man is fairly clear. It means that he has the right to live his own life as he pleases, so far as this is compatible with the like freedom of his fellows.

But freedom means more than this to most men who value it,—vastly more. It means a new sense of responsibility. For, in proportion as thinking men regard themselves free to do as they please, they are willing to be held accountable for what they do. To be free and to be responsible for what one does are one and the same thing. So long as a man is compelled to do as he is told, he can be neither praised nor blamed; he is not morally answerable for what he cannot help. But as soon as he is free from such compulsion, he knows that he may be justly censured or approved for his acts, since now they truly belong to him and to him alone. Indeed, it is largely for the sake of acquiring the worth and glory of this responsibility that the modern man has sought freedom at all. He wants freedom in

order that he may become, in Henley's famous phrase, the master of his fate and the captain of his soul.

This, then, is the clew to our insistence upon our freedom. This is why we of the Occident hold as sacred our heritage of the long struggle for freedom,—each of us desires to feel that he is the amenable fashioner of his own life. The chief problems of modern times are likely to be problems of how to secure further freedom of this sort; freedom in all the arenas of activity where men seek lustily to fulfill themselves; not only political freedom, of which the American Declaration is the slogan, but industrial freedom, intellectual freedom, even religious freedom. In its final meaning, the World War was a fight for the freedom that should give both men and nations a new sense that they are morally responsible.

I

If men have thus struggled for freedom in order that they might gain a civilization in which they could become the fashioners of their own lives, the masters of their own fates, it follows that they must believe that such a mastery is possible. And it is certain that the modern man is practically sure that nothing in the world, not even nature itself, can finally reduce him to a mere plaything of chance and fate. Practically, he will not, he cannot assent to

any such monstrous creed; he will not and cannot act otherwise than upon the assumption that, in abundant measure, his own destiny is in his own hands. This is the thrill of his life, the significance of his optimism, the exhilaration of his struggles, and the worth of his victories over nature and the untoward things that arise to confront him in his own civilization.

The astonishing thing is that while, in the region of his best deeds, the modern man commits himself whole-heartedly to this sort of responsible freedom, he is rarely able to substantiate his valorous belief by adequate reasons. That is, practically, he is sure of his mastery over fate; but theoretically he is quite as likely to be what is popularly called a "fatalist," convinced that all he does is the result of causes over which he has no real power. This is one of the most interesting of the many paradoxes that belong to the man of to-day,—still more interesting because he seems so very unaware of it. Suddenly confront the cherished freedom of his will with his scientific knowledge of the nature of man and his world, and he is likely to be "stricken through with doubt," that is, always theoretically. And, theoretically, he does not mind this; because, oddly enough, the theoretical and practical lives of the contemporary man are quite sharply sundered. Live with him and fight with him, and he sublimely demonstrates his conviction of his freedom; but once argue with him, and he is just as likely to cele-

brate fatalism; or, more accurately, determinism,—the doctrine that what he is and what he does is, after all, the necessary product of heredity and environment, or of God's will working itself out in His universe. The immense vogue of the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam is a symptom of just this viewpoint. In it the modern man is likely to find a fascinating echo of his more reflective moods. With the Persian bard, he can intellectually assent to such inexorableness as is expressed by the oft quoted lines,

> The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
> Moves on; nor all your Piety nor Wit
> Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
> Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

This theoretical conviction that man ultimately is determined in all his ways by something bigger than himself comes to the modern mind naturally, and from two sources. One source is the prevalent conception of nature; the other is the prevalent conception of God. As for nature, science has taught men to think of themselves as caught in nature's vast system of causes and effects, which cannot except them from the law that each thing—sea, or star, or human being—is compelled to be just what it is by forces that it cannot control. Neither sea, nor star, nor human being has any real choice in the matter. And as for God, He is most commonly thought of (so far as He is thought of at

all) as one whose will is so supreme, whose purpose so pervades all things, that it becomes eminently foolish to suppose that man's puny desires can defy it, or that any freedom that he can assert for himself is anything but illusory. Not that men are in the habit of carrying their reasoning about God so far as this extreme conclusion; but the inference is logically inherent in much of popular belief and tends to become evident the more one thinks. At any rate, neither the current ideas of nature nor of God, when reflected upon, seem to the educated mind to leave man much room for boasting of the freedom of his will. To assert it very forcibly at this stage of human knowledge seems a presumptuous egotism.

II

And yet from the beginning of civilization it has seemed to many great thinkers that unless man is vindicated as really free from being wholly determined by nature or by God, what we call the moral life loses its meaning. For unless men can really be held accountable for what they do; unless their deeds are in some measure their very own, and not utterly forced upon them by external influences that they cannot evade, it seems idle morally to praise or to blame anybody for what he does. To say to a man that he ought to do one thing rather than another certainly seems to carry with it the

assumption that he is free to choose his own way and is responsible for his choice. A high moral valor and a sense of responsible freedom go together.

Of course, one must expect to be asked what difference it can possibly make even if the man of today cannot theoretically prove that he is master of his fate, provided that, as has been admitted, he practically lives as though he were. After all, it may be said, it is not a man's mere theories, but his practical beliefs that count in this world. The obvious answer is that this practical and unreflective conviction of men that they are free may be entirely wrong; and, if so, it ought speedily to be amended. Men surely do not want to build their lives upon an error. If men are really free, it ought to be provable. And unless men's practical belief in their own freedom can be made reasonable in theory, their moral faith will not endure, especially in an age which subjects itself more and more to the tests of reason.

There are thinkers who deny this; who say that however reason might decide on the question of man's freedom, he would act exactly the same. For instance, we are told that we are under a grievous delusion if we think, as some do, that our activities would lose their vigor, or be paralyzed, if we believed that all we are and do is determined by forces outside ourselves. Attention has often been called to the fact that the belief of the Mohammedans in

predestination has been no obstacle to their being one of the most active and aggressive peoples in the world. The question is asked, If you are desirous, say, of going to Paris, how can the knowledge that this desire is the necessary result of causes you cannot control change your plans? You will go to Paris if you can, will you not, in spite of your conviction that you are determined?

Let us see. Suppose that I desire to go to Paris, and that I believe that my desire is determined by forces I cannot control. And, since I am a thorough "fatalist," I also believe that every deed I am to do in fulfilling this desire is already determined beforehand by forces utterly beyond my guidance. Now, suppose difficulties arise. We will say that it is impossible to obtain a passport without great effort; or I have not the passage-money and will have to earn it at great sacrifice to myself. If I really and truly believe that I have absolutely no share in fashioning the events that shall take me to Paris, I will make no effort, well knowing that if it is foreordained that I reach Paris, I will arrive there somehow, in any event. Whereas, if I genuinely believe that I do help to fashion my own future, I will straightway struggle to overcome whatever obstacles confront me. In the one case, I believe that it makes no difference whether I struggle or not,—the event is predetermined to happen one way or another. In the other case, I know that my efforts make all the difference in the world.

Further, if I believe that I am absolutely determined in all I do, I will lose all sense of responsibility for what I do. And to lose the sense of responsibility is, without the shadow of a doubt, to lose the sense of all morals, all sense of legitimate praise or blame. If some one objects that I may have a sense of moral responsibility and yet be "fated" to have it, I make this decisive reply, "Perhaps; but I cannot have this sense and at the same time *believe* that all I do is fated." And remember that we are considering the effect of our *beliefs* upon our conduct. This double belief would be a flat contradiction. It is the same as to say that at the very same time and in the same sense I believe that I am both fated and free.

The truth is, there is only one sense in which it can be said that a man will act just the same whether he believes in determinism or freedom,—namely, in the sense that no matter what he believes, he will tend to act as though he were free. The determinist says, "I will do all I can to go to Paris, in spite of my belief that my acts are all fated." To which I answer, "Exactly so,—*in spite of your belief in determinism!*" And I immediately call attention to the fact that one cannot continue to act long in spite of his intimate convictions, if they are really convictions. We cannot thus permanently sever what we think from what we do. If the determinist acts the same as though he thought he were free, in spite of his belief, it simply means

that he does not take his belief in good faith; he ignores it, and even contradicts it in that large world of action where beliefs are put to the rigid test. That is, his belief that he is fated is merely verbal or abstractly intellectual, not vital or practical. And yet this will never do; for the belief in fatalism is, in its very nature, a belief that pretends to interpret the world of a man's practical deeds; so, if it means anything at all, it cannot remain a mere thought; in the long run, it will transform all of a man's life.

All this is merely to say that most men who assert that they believe that man is absolutely fated do not really believe what they profess. To say that their actions belie their theory is to say that their theory belies their real convictions. Yet, while this is true of most men, I must confess that I can conceive of men, and even of large social groups, honestly and vitally persuaded that there is no real freedom for man. There have been such men and such groups in the history of civilization. But I add that in so far as they were really convinced of such an outlook upon life, it tended to affect their lives very significantly, in direct proportion to the strength of their conviction. Extreme commitment to the belief in fatalism (so far as this is seriously possible) has ever tended to result in that quiescence of life which, ceasing the futile struggle, says, with whatever beatific peace you will, "Serene I fold my hands and wait," assured that, somehow or

other, "my own will come to me." Or, as with some of the famous Stoics, when life becomes too insistent, such a necessitarian doctrine means the submission of suicide. Extreme fatalism, when prevalent in large groups or races of men, has led to the notably passive civilizations, such as some of those of the Orient, where fatalism has flourished most conspicuously as a practical creed. Or, if the belief in fatalism be not so logically extreme, it tends to lead to the life of the pleasure-seeker. For the logical conclusion of a half-hearted belief in our helplessness means a sort of pessimism with regard to the loftier and so more strenuous of the moral quests, and lets one down easily into the life that seeks the paths of least resistance,—which means the life of pleasure. Oddly enough, this is precisely the moral conclusion of the fatalistic *Rubaiyat* already quoted. The poet argues that since it is true that what "the first morning of creation wrote," "the last dawn of reckoning shall read," the secret of living is to get what pleasure you may; "while you live, drink!—for once dead, you never shall return." Yes, difficult as it is to hold to the conviction of determinism in the world of human action, a man or a people may be enough persuaded of it to affect grievously the vigor of moral loyalties. Moral passiveness and determinism go together; just as a robust faith in freedom has belonged to aggressive and forward-looking peoples ever since history began, our own America

being time's latest and most conspicuous example.

It turns out that an abiding moral faith—yes, the very existence of a real moral order—implies indubitable conviction that men are in some sense free. So we are face to face with a rather grim alternative; either this conviction of freedom must be amply vindicated through reason by the man of to-day, or the moral order as we understand it must be straightway abandoned. Now, it is surely sensible, before abandoning our faith in the moral order, to make an honest effort to see if our freedom can in any sense be reasonably justified. And if another motive is needed for seriously attacking the problem, it is that upon its solution depends the unraveling of a number of other important problems of life and mind.

III

A cynic might well remark that the most prominent characteristic of the historic discussion about free will is its voluminousness. Yet no discussion about any problem is voluminous enough until it has been solved. However, we ought to make our problem as simple as we can; and so it is well at the very outset sharply to define what we are looking for. And I shall put the problem in the form of three fairly simple questions: First, why do we want freedom? Second, what sort of freedom do

we want? Third, is there any such freedom to be had?

First, then, why do we want freedom at all? The answer to this question is already apparent. We want freedom for the sake of securing that moral responsibility indispensable to a moral order; for the sake of being able to consider men accountable for what they do. Or, put it in another way: I want freedom so that the approval or disapproval of my deeds is really a praise or blame of myself as the source of them. I want freedom so that my deeds may be deemed truly *mine*,—not chiefly caused by something not myself. I want freedom in the sense that I may truly be said to fashion my own life; freedom to realize and fulfill myself in my own way, and through my own self.

Second, what sort of freedom do I need for this purpose? In order to discover this, one has to ask what sorts of freedom there are. What sorts have men fought for? Let us scan them for a moment and see if any of them will give us the kind of freedom that we want.

There are some kinds of freedom that are not worth while. For instance, there are some who think that it would be a good thing to be free from any kind of government. But their number is small. They are sometimes called anarchists. Whatever the merits of such a freedom, we assuredly do not need it for the sort of responsibility we seek; provided always that we are free to share in the

making of the laws by which we are governed. This is what the long struggle for political freedom has meant; not our freedom from having any laws at all, but our freedom to help create them. This is what the freedom of democracy means,—not freedom from government, but the freedom of *self*-government; a situation in which every man is not only a subject but a sovereign, to be held morally responsible for violation of law because he freely shares in the making of it. No, we do not need freedom from human law.

Perhaps the freedom we want is freedom from the laws of nature. Sometimes we think so; especially when nature frustrates our purposes by events that respect in not one iota our personal desires. And yet, when we look at the matter in the large, we see that the reign of natural law is something upon which we actually wish to depend. If nature acted in one way to-day and in another way to-morrow; if a cause produced one effect this moment and an entirely different effect the next, how could we plan our lives? If nature were capricious so that we could not depend upon her laws, we could not freely or surely accomplish anything. We would be the abject slaves of a chance that would mock our every effort at the building of a consistent life or a rational civilization. To depend upon nature is to depend upon her constancy. If in her constancy she is sometimes cruel, we rise above such cruelties by learning her secrets and using them

as servants of our rational desires. Thus, instead of wishing that there were no law of gravitation, I use that very law in the commonest tasks of my everyday life. I would surely not be free if it acted one way on Sundays and another way on Mondays, at the caprice of anybody who wanted to change it.

But if we do not want to be absolutely and entirely free from the dependable laws of nature, it is sometimes said that our freedom demands that we human beings shall be considered the one exception to the otherwise universal reign of natural law. Let all nature but man be ruled by such inexorable uniformities as nature legislates,—stars, suns, chemical reactions, harvests; but let man be the conspicuous exception, so that if stars cannot do as they please, man at least has some leeway, some initiative of his own, some freedom that does not belong to the rest of nature. But how can this be? In the first place, since men have physical bodies, they are members of exactly that same nature to which suns and stars belong. So they do not know what they ask when they ask to be made exceptions to the reign of such natural law as there is. If man were such a capricious exception, he could no longer depend upon the changeless laws of his body's health and disease, of sanitation, of eugenics; these are natural laws that reach into him from the outer physical world and govern him; in the knowledge of these laws he plans his life. After all,

human progress depends not upon annihilating these immutable laws, but upon discovering them and relying upon them! What a sorry victim of chance that man would be who found that he could establish no dependable bodily habits whose results he could know, because the human body insisted upon being an exception to every one of nature's laws! In eating, for instance, what would be good for him to-day might be poison for him to-morrow.

And wholly apart from the desirability that man alone should be a capricious exception to natural law, it is clearly necessary that if he deems certain uniform laws to belong to the world of natural bodies in their very nature (as science does), he cannot consistently make a glaring exception of himself just because he is a human body. And as for the human mind, even the scientific investigation of so subtle a thing as it is reveals that it, too, is ruled by certain rigid laws and that these laws can be determined. Under the same circumstances, the same ideas and feelings, yes, volitions occur. If this were not so, experimental psychology would not be the science that it is. No, it is neither desirable nor possible that man should be the one thing in the world beyond the reign of those laws that pervade all things. To do away with a natural law in the isolated case of man would be to do away with it entirely; for man simply cannot separate himself from nature in this absurd way. So runs

the argument. If we find any reason for amending it later, it must be in keeping with the spirit of science.

IV

So far, we have found two sorts of freedom that we do not want and that, furthermore, science would not let us have, even if we did want them. We can neither want nor obtain a sort of nature where there is no law; and we can neither want nor obtain the kind of freedom that makes man so cut off from nature that he is an entire exception to its laws. For, whatever else man is, he is also a member of the natural order, the same as mountains and trees and stars.

But there is still a chance for us. Of all the notions of human freedom, the most popular is that of *freedom of choice*. This is probably what is really in the minds of most of those who claim that man is an exception to nature's rigid laws. Freedom of choice at least, it is alleged, we have; and it is also asserted that it does not do away with the possibility of natural law; so that here we have a freedom that pretends to be in keeping with science. Whatever deed a man does, he must do it in accordance with nature's laws; but he has the freedom to decide whether or not he will do the deed at all. Granted that one cannot do absolutely as one pleases in the world of nature, it is contended that

one has at least enough freedom to choose between alternatives, so that he can always say of any course of action he has chosen, "I might have done otherwise." If I choose to go to Paris, I must obey the laws of nature, such as those of motion, of gravitation, and the rest; but I have the freedom to decide whether I actually shall go to Paris.

Since this idea of freedom is the most prevalent of all; and since most people think that at least this much freedom is absolutely necessary in order to hold men morally accountable for their deeds, let us examine it very closely and see what we mean by it, whether we really need it, and whether science will let us have it.

It is always hazardous to define what people mean by an idea that they rarely stop to consider seriously, and never analyze adequately, but merely take for granted in its vagueness. Yet we must attempt now to make as clear as possible what men usually mean when they claim to possess freedom of choice, or we shall make no progress in showing its value and its truth. In analyzing what people really intend by this notion, one must not only have in mind the common everyday utterances of everyday men, but also the literature—the dramas, novels, poems—that seem to express worthily the common consciousness and the common life.

Looking at the popular notion of freedom of choice from this broad point of view, it seems to mean, first of all, that at least sometimes, and when-

ever I am to be held morally accountable, there is actually more than one possibility of action open to me; and that I myself can determine which of these courses of action I shall adopt, irrespective of previous events in the outer world, or of my own previous character and circumstances. No matter what my heredity and environment, no matter whether I have previously lived the life of a saint or a sinner, there are times when I find myself confronted with alternatives of conduct, where nothing remains but my own free edict to determine what I shall do.

What this general statement of the case deeply implies is for us to find out. To the common consciousness it does not mean that I can *always* choose to act as I act. To hold this would be absurd. For there is no doubt whatever that all of us are frequently compelled to do things that we do not in the least choose to do. At such times, too, we deny that we are to be rightly held morally responsible; if blamed for what we have done, we disclaim the deed as really our own; it was done to us, not by us.

Yet, it is very important to note that even in such cases I am frequently held to have a residuum of moral responsibility, in that while I could not *do* as I would choose, still I could *think* as I chose, even if I could not carry my thought into outer action. Thus, I often defend myself when I have done something for which people blame me, but which I could not help, by saying, "I disapprove of what I was

compelled to do as much as you disapprove of it; but I could not do what I chose; it simply happened that circumstances thwarted me." And when our accusers believe that this is so, they exonerate us. But this exoneration in such cases is always based upon the belief that although I cannot *do* as as I choose, I still can freely choose what I *would like* to do, anyway; that is, I am still free to choose my purposes, my intentions, what I would do if I could, even when I cannot make my choice outwardly effective.

This leads us to the consideration that all our choice between deeds really reaches back to a choice between our *thoughts* about deeds. That is, first of all we have in our minds two or more ideas of what might be done in a given situation; we then choose which idea is the one we wish to adopt. Once we commit ourselves to one idea of action rather than another, the choice is made and inevitably works itself out into external deed so far as it can. As the psychologist likes to put it, all voluntary action is "ideomotor." But whether the external deed is permitted by circumstances or not, our real moral responsibility, our real freedom of choice, has to do with what we choose to think or genuinely intend. It has been said that the road to hell is paved with good intentions; it would be better to say that the road to hell is paved with sham intentions. The road to heaven is paved with good intentions, if they are the genuine and whole-hearted choices that

lead, as such choices always do, to the utmost effort for their realization.

Freedom of choice, then, is, in the last resort, the freedom to choose our thoughts. Not that we can choose to think *any* thought; but of several thoughts before the attention, we can often choose the better or best thought or plan of action. Which means, too, that we can also choose the worse idea or plan of action. The freedom to think and do right involves the freedom to think and do wrong. Or, if at any moment I cannot freely choose which of several plans of action I shall adopt, it is held to be my own fault because of previous bad choices, for which I am responsible. Dickens calls upon us to "think for a moment of the long chain of iron or gold, of thorns or flowers, that would never have bound you, but for the formation of the first link on one memorable day." But, in the long run, at least, the popular consciousness feels that we have some control over our purposes; and even if at any given time we have made it difficult freely to choose between alternative purposes, this may be rectified at length if we will but use the free effort which is still ours and is forever ours.

This, then, seems to be the meaning of freedom of choice according to the popular consciousness. It means that we sometimes have the freedom to choose among ideas of alternative deeds before the attention. It further means that such choices often can be realized and made effective in our outward

acts, so that of many of our deeds we can truly say that we freely chose them, that "we might have done otherwise."

Granted that this is the general meaning of the popular notion of freedom of choice, the next question is why the need of it is considered so imperative. Faith in our freedom to choose has always been one of the impregnable citadels of practical belief. Most religions, in spite of their all-powerful gods, have taught it from the time when the Hebrew prophet adjured his people, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve!" to present day religion, with its august alternatives which man may still freely choose and even deity may not violate. In spite of the ever-increasing attempts of philosophers and scientists to reduce the universe to rigid order, where no "chance" shall anywhere intrude, and where free choice shall be a contradiction, the popular belief in freedom of choice remains as lusty as before. Practically, men have no doubt about it, as has been abundantly emphasized. The major portion of the world's dramas, novels, and poems, in spite of the tragic doom of a Euripides, or the pessimistic determinism of a Hardy, celebrate man's mastery over fate within the limits of his genuine choices, through which, by his own deed, he reaps his triumphs and defeats.

The reason why men cannot relinquish their practical belief in freedom of choice is the same reason already given for wanting any freedom. Men want

freedom of choice because without it they cannot conceive how they are to be considered morally accountable for their deeds, masters of their own fates, creators of their own lives, members of a genuine moral order. It seems to be the least freedom that will make a moral order possible. Take this freedom away, and there is no freedom left except a name, no matter what subtleties it is made to cover for our intellectual deception. To have "no choice in the matter" is to be absolved from any responsibility in the matter. To have no chance in life is to have the portals of free choice shut in one's face. To have power is to have the power to choose. It is the meaning of the possibility of human progress. True, some argue that the moral order can progress only on the assumption that we can determine human wills for the sake of social welfare and service; that if men are really free, education, laws, arguments, entreaties, moral suasion, punishment—all means we use to determine conduct—are in vain. But the fact is that we never act on the conviction that we can literally determine the will of any one by arguments, entreaties, moral suasion, or by any other means. It is said of woman that "convinced against her will, she's of the same opinion still"; wherein is involved a deep philosophy applicable not only to women, but to all wills. The most we are conscious of being able to do is to help to make circumstances favorable for a choice one way or another. The writer's consciousness, at

least, falls far short of aiming ultimately to determine the will of another, and he does not conceive that education aims to do anything of the sort. The entire trend of modern conceptions of education signifies, rather, the reverse of such an idea of compulsion. As for the notion that punishment is a powerful determining cause, and that punishment can have a meaning only in a determinate scheme of things that assumes that society can determine a man to act for the social good, again I am not sure that society does aim directly to determine the criminal's will, or even desires to do such a far-reaching thing, even in the reformatory purposes of punishment. And I might add that the socially protective aspect of punishment visited on the criminal, especially in the form of imprisonment, rather suggests the failure of society to determine men, save in the superficial sense of physical constraint. For the criminal as well as for the martyr, "stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage." No thumbscrew, no discipline, no lock and key can determine the murderer's heart not to hate; at the best, we can only make conditions favorable for him to love.

Men are raised above mere things by the fact that they continually confront that most proud and awful of all imperatives, "Choose!" The zest of living, yes, life itself and the keen sense of life is the sense of creative choice, which is the sense of morals,—yes, the moral sense itself! We can leave the justi-

fication of this pervasive conviction of men until later; but the conviction itself is ancient, universal, and genuine.

V

But the decisive question still remains. Granted the desirability of freedom of choice, will our scientific knowledge permit us to have it without contradiction? Leaving alone for the time being the question of our power to choose our thoughts, what has science to say to the supposition that we can freely choose our outward deeds? Such deeds, whether freely chosen or not, belong to the physical world of science, whose verdict, therefore, we cannot ignore.

Now the common answer of science to the supposition of freedom of choice is very clear indeed. The arguments that it advances against thinking of man as an exception to nature's laws—arguments we have already reviewed—are considered equally cogent against freedom of choice, which is regarded as nothing but a particular way of thinking of man as just such an anomalous and impossible exception. Nature's continents and oceans, her winters and summers can never choose what they would be, and can never say, "I might have done otherwise." Neither can nature's men. Once more, it seems difficult for any one who has become familiar with modern scientific method and

discovery to avoid being a determinist, or, as we popularly call it, a fatalist. Yes, the issue seems clearly enough defined; accept science, you are a determinist; reject it, and you may be a libertarian if you like, but no sane modern mind will pay any attention to your prattlings. Surely, science in any real sense is made possible only by the supposition that there is no such thing as an uncaused event anywhere. There seems to be no reason for making an exception of the acts of human wills. For science can tolerate absolutely no exceptions. Where science is not able to find the causes of some event, it must, perforce, imagine them present, even if their actual discovery happens to be impossible. Especially when we come to consider modern science's most fruitful generalization, the theory of evolution, we must see that all supposed free choices are in reality the inevitable and necessary results of heredity and environment. All is determined; our parentage, and hence our inheritance,—these at least are no matters for choice. Nor are our time and place of birth; the peculiarities of the family and people among whom we find ourselves; their language, their customs, their church, their politics, their society and their place in that society. Our education reflects the general culture and ideals of our particular times. Through all the seven ages, from the infant in the nurse's arms to the "last scene of all that ends this strange, eventful history" in "second childishness and mere oblivion," there is

no place where free choice could make its entrance on life's stage. Man's birth is a necessary product, as is his whole career; and to both, as to death, his only liberty is to submit. He is a part and only a part of the total life of humanity and, finally, of universal nature. It does not seem that one need go into the minor complexities of the problem. The general position of science is sufficiently clear; and man seems to have no choice but to admit that, so far as human knowledge has gone, its position is impregnable.

If one raises the objection that, as a matter of fact, science does not actually succeed in reducing everything in the world to uniform laws, the difficulty seems easy of solution. There is a passage in Froude where, raising this difficulty against making history a science, he denies the possibility of scientifically predicting even such large world-movements as Mohammedanism, or Buddhism, or Christianity. It seems at first sight that if human actions are causally determined in the way science claims, it would be possible to predict them. In short, the unpredictability of human deeds suggests that they are in some sense or other free of the inevitable causal sequence.

The clear answer to this is that we forget that predictability of events is possible only in the later stages of any science, and is the sign and test of its comparatively complete cataloguing of causes and effects. Witness astronomy, whose predictions are

now quite certain because it is an old science, whose major phenomena are comparatively simple. Yet, in the infancy of his science, the astronomer often predicted what never befell; but one does not say that it was because astronomical facts were not even then subject to causal law, but simply because the astronomer was yet ignorant with regard to both facts and laws. So, one ought to say that the inability to foretell so complex a thing as what human beings will do at a given time is due to our ignorance of the workings of law, not to its absence. The fact is that we do foretell in the main what men will do in very many circumstances, or human society would be impossible. There would be no business, no credit, no social institutions unless we could depend upon our faith in what men will do, knowing what sort of men they are.

Such is the common argument of science against the possibility that man can choose his deeds so that he can truly say, "I might have done otherwise." And sober modern thought has tended to consider science's argument as conclusive or, in any event, baffling. So that most men that are scientifically trained find it difficult or impossible to find intellectual defense for freedom of choice, whatever their practical faith in its desirability and necessity.

But I believe that the modern mind need not and should not relinquish its ancient faith so readily. At any rate, in a matter that so vitally affects all our outlook upon life and reaches to the very foundations

of the moral order, we ought to make an effort to sift science's argument very critically, with the same rigid logic that science itself endeavors to employ. And, applying such a rigid logic to the reasonings of natural science, I am convinced that it can be shown that science is in no position to disprove the immemorial freedom that common sense and the moral sense have ever insisted upon.

Science's one and only argument against freedom of choice is that human choices cannot be free from external causal law without introducing an incalculable and disturbing element into the physical world. But here arise two important questions that have too often been neglected; namely, Is it not conceivable that there *are* incalculable elements in the physical world? and, after all, Is it true that science would be destroyed if there were? There is a widespread belief that this is so; but startling as it may at first appear, critical reflection fails to vindicate this belief.

For why is it not possible to have uniformities in a world that is not wholly uniform? Is it necessary to hold that unless all is ruled by mechanistic law, nothing is? This has been the position of many scientists. But is it not perfectly conceivable that one may have a pattern that is fixed once for all in many respects, and yet which has variable elements within it? Such is an architect's plan that makes certain fundamental prescriptions, and then allows many free alternatives within these prescriptions,

all equally harmonious with the immutable aspects of the plan; such is an art gallery, with the paintings capable of being continually and harmoniously changed; such is a song that ever keeps its melody, but has many possible variations within it. The world is full of such fixed patterns with variable and alternative elements; and the world itself may well be just such a pattern, where there is much fundamental necessity, much uniformity, and also, within that necessity, much that is a matter of free alternative. Thus, the law of gravitation is a fixed part of the fixed pattern of our physical universe; yet it is entirely compatible with the law that I shall freely choose to stand up or to sit down,—since the fact that I choose (once granted) does not itself violate the law of gravitation in the least, and my standing up or sitting down will be in conformity to it in any event. To say that an action conforms to natural laws is not to say that it can be wholly accounted for by them.

The conception of universal determination is a convenient one for science's special purposes; but the facts are never able to bear it out. Every prediction of science is a prediction with an "if"; and one of the certain "if's" involved is this: If man does not interfere. There are other "if's" too; I single out man merely because man's freedom happens to be our immediate subject of regard, as well as because science actually has most trouble in accounting for what men do by its ascertained laws.

What men will do contains always uncalculated elements. Events will naturally and necessarily happen thus and so, if man does not intervene. This is precisely what we practically assume, even in a scientific laboratory. We create certain conditions which will certainly result in certain effects,—if some one does not meddle with the apparatus, or if some one does not upset the chemicals. And whether some one will choose to do this, science can never tell. It can say only that if some one does happen to take it into his head to spoil the experiment, even the spoiling of it will take place according to definite laws. That many things in nature act in certain definite ways does not prove that man cannot freely use them, any more than the fact that a locomotive runs according to a certain mechanism proves that man cannot freely use it, if he uses it as it has to be used when it is used at all. Let it be thoroughly admitted that science may choose to ignore this human incalculability from the standpoint of theory; that for its convenience it assumes as its working hypothesis universal necessitation, in order to discover all the uniformities there are; this is well. But this does not *prove* that everything, as a matter of actual fact, *can* be reduced to uniformities, any more than the famous hypothesis of ether —purely a working hypothesis—proves that there is such a thing. Science may need and may use the hypothesis of universal determination in whatever form it pleases for its own special purposes. But

a working hypothesis of this sort, a hypothesis of convenience for partial purposes, must not be confused with a *reality.* "But things act *as though* the hypothesis were true." I reply, "Things don't; for predictability is the only test; and up to now you do not successfully predict so far as man is concerned (omitting other exceptions here), nor is it possible for you now to prove that you ever can." *If* a man chooses to do this or that, science can say that he must do it in conformity to the laws of nature; but *whether* a man will actually choose this or that, science can never tell. If science replies that it could tell if it knew enough, the whole question is begged. *For how does science know what science could do if science knew what it does not know?* One has just as much of a right to reply, If you knew all that natural science could know about a human being, you could *not* predict what he would do. Either position is based upon equal ignorance. The plain fact remains. Scientific prediction is continually upset by human interference. Astronomy can more certainly predict an eclipse than a chemist can predict the results of a delicate experiment largely *because astronomers know that their phenomena happen to be free from human interference.* Wherever man has anything to do, the incalculable sets in. Within regions where man acts, the sequence of scientific events is increasingly tentative, and in direct proportion as man has anything to do with them.

VI

So far, then, as our outward acts are concerned, natural science can neither prove nor disprove that they are sometimes freely chosen by us. The very incalculability which such free choices would introduce into the physical world of science is actually found there; and only scientific dogmatism will ignore it by assuming as final the hypotheses that express the desire for a wholly mechanistic order of things. Emphatically, science does not disprove freedom of choice, so far as our physical deeds are concerned.

But it has been already pointed out that all choice between our deeds really reaches back to a choice between our *ideas* of deeds. So that our real freedom of choice has to do with what we choose to *think* or genuinely intend. Thus, at the last, it belongs to the realm of psychology, rather than to physical science. We are now driven to the ultimate question,—whether psychology as a science can permit any such free choice between our thoughts. If it can, it has no difficulty in admitting freely chosen deeds; for practically all schools of psychology assume that our voluntary acts reach back to the states of consciousness that are either the occasions or causes of them.

Like physical science, psychology assumes that her world is a world of uniformities, where no exception can be allowed. Like physical science, she

finds it highly useful to assume this, since it is psychology's business as a science to discover uniformities; and she must not prejudice her task by assuming that here or there her task will be in vain. But, again, like physical science, the fact that her most convenient working hypothesis is determinism does not prove that every thought, every feeling, every volition is, as a matter of truth, the result of deterministic and calculable causes. Indeed, the psychologists do not succeed in reducing all that we think to laws of necessity. They fall far short of predicting what we shall think and, therefore, what we shall do. This is the ideal of psychology; but her ideal, worthy as it is, has never been attained and may never be attained. In psychology, even more than in physical science, there is thus far a vast region of the incalculable, as well as a goodly realm of ascertained uniformities. And this region of the incalculable lets in the possibility of freedom of choice. Thus thought so great a psychologist as William James:

The fact is that the question of free will is insoluble on strictly psychologic grounds. After a certain amount of effort of attention has been given to an idea, it is manifestly impossible to tell whether either more or less of it *might* have been given or not. . . . Had one no motives drawn from elsewhere to make one partial to either solution, one might easily leave the matter undecided. But a psychologist cannot be expected to be thus impartial, having a great motive in favor of determinism. He wants to build a *Science;* and a Science is a system of fixed relations. Wher-

ever there are independent variables, there Science stops. So far, then, as our volitions may be independent variables, a scientific psychology must ignore that fact, and treat of them only so far as they are fixed functions. In other words, she must deal with the *general laws* of volition exclusively; with the impulsive and inhibitory character of ideas; with the nature of their appeals to the attention; with the conditions under which effort may arise, etc.; but not with the precise amounts of effort, for these, if our wills be free, are impossible to compute. She thus abstracts from free will, without necessarily denying its existence. Practically, however, such abstraction is not distinguished from rejection; and most actual psychologists have no hesitation in denying that free will exists.[1]

Such a denial, however, is manifestly in the interests of a special point of view and does not finally prove anything. We find psychology precisely in the same situation as physical science; it may not like freedom of choice; it certainly cannot prove freedom of choice; but, just as certainly, it cannot disprove freedom of choice.

But what is it in us that does this free choosing, regardless of previous events in the outer world, in spite of our previous character and of all the experiences that have tended to make us what we are up-to-date? Well, suppose we frankly say what common sense would say, that it is "I" that do the choosing,—the being that I call *Myself*. What then? Does psychology deny such a Self? Why, psychology has nothing to do with proving or disproving such a Self, what it is, or what it can do. This is

[1] William James, *Psychology: Briefer Course*, pp. 456, 457.

the warning that any psychologist will state at the very threshold of his science; he does not deal with what we call the Self at all; he deals not even with a Mind,—but only with passing mental states. Whether beneath or behind or above mental states there is a perduring Self, he knows not and cares not. It simply is none of his special affair. If he goes beyond his field and tries to disprove such a Self, he ever finds himself caught in contradictions from which logic can extricate him only by assuming that we are, including the psychologist, Selves,—as common sense and the predominant philosophies of twenty-three centuries have insisted.

Assume, then, that it is this Self of ours that freely chooses; that it is this Self of ours that is really free. Are we challenged thereupon to explain just what this Self is? Is it not enough *that* it is? That it must be assumed, even though not thoroughly understood, just as science has often assumed entities, such as ether, although not thoroughly understood? If philosophers insist that the ego that chooses must be entirely explained before they can accept freedom of its choice, then I reserve the same right to believe none of their philosophy until they, too, have cleared up just what the ego is. How many philosophies succeed in doing this? Further, why not say that from moral necessity we have learned one thing at least about the ego,—namely, that it is free? *Perhaps this is the central thing about it!* Indeed, if it is the essential precondition of all the

other moral qualities of the Self, it is at least one of the central things. The other central thing is rationality, the ability to choose according to the standards of reason, which even science claims is one of the fundamental and inalienable demands of the human spirit. Freedom and rationality, these are the fundamental things that we need to know about the Self to make morals possible,—plus its immortality, which we have already argued. Yes, a Self, or ego, or person is precisely to be defined as that which is to be distinguished from mere things by its power of freely choosing, of morally creating its own life. In all our concrete living and thinking, we *start* with the ego rather than *end* with it: just as the famous philosopher Descartes found he had to start with it, since it was the one thing he could not doubt without contradiction. The trouble is that we try to get freedom as a conclusion from premises; whereas, it itself is the ultimate premise of all life conceived as a moral order.

VII

Science, neither physical nor psychological, can disprove freedom of choice. But this fact does not prove it, either. It merely makes it a possibility. And there is so much scientific prejudice against accepting this mere possibility as something to which we shall finally commit ourselves, that before doing so we ought, in all fairness, to scrutinize one other

conception of freedom that has been conscientiously offered as genuinely giving us moral responsibility and yet which, it is claimed, does not undermine the conception of absolute determinism, so desirable as a scientific hypothesis.

This conception of freedom, which claims to be entirely within the spirit of science, urges that man is free in the sense that while all that he does is the product of necessity, his actions are not only the result of causes outside him, but of causes within him. That is, he is free in the sense that what he does is not entirely the coercion of forces acting upon him from without himself. We are cautioned to remember that it is not only the extraneous influence that acts upon one's character; but the person himself is to be accounted with; he, too, reacts upon the external influence, be it society or what it may; he is not merely the plaything of his environment; he helps mold his own future. And this is alleged to be the real meaning of human freedom. Science, we are told, would be stupid indeed if it entirely eliminated human "freedom" from the vocabulary and gave it no meaning whatever. Every individual has a character of his own; his surroundings make him; but he, in turn, helps to fashion his surroundings, and reacts upon their influence. Thus, a man is free in so far as he has this coöperative part in his own destiny. "I choose," really means this: "I (my inner necessity) have a part in my decision." Can I say, "I might have done otherwise"? Yes,

just so far as external compulsion is not the whole story.

This conception of freedom has been influential. But, upon reflection, does it give man any freedom of worth? It is difficult to see how it does. In this sense of freedom, even a star, an automobile, a snowflake is free,—free in the sense of having an inner as well as an outer necessity. Even a star moves in its orbit not merely because of the world of forces outside it, but because of its own mass, its own constitution as just this star. In this sense, it, too, helps to mold its own future. But this is the freedom of mere things. Surely, we discriminate a freedom of persons from that of mere things! If one denies the reality of some such freedom, one robs freedom of all its moral significance. Man has no more moral responsibility than the star, for he has no more freedom than it. He can never say, "I might have done otherwise," but only "Oh that I had been such as to have had the *power* to have done otherwise!"

But it is further urged that even within this conception man has a freedom that things have not. The difference is that man determines himself by conscious purposes. By such purposes, his life is made a unity, and all momentary decisions are subordinated to them. It is claimed that this capability of ordering one's life by purposes is what we mean by the peculiar freedom of the human will.

Will this freedom satisfy our moral demands?

Does it make man in any sense responsible for what he does? Surely not. For in this way, freedom is made compatible with determinism only in the lamentable way in which, in the well-known limerick, the Lady of Niger became compatible with the tiger. Truly, determinism devours freedom. First one says that the individual has a character of his own; but in the same breath one asserts that this very character is the mere product of an evolutionary process, so that a man's character is not ultimately *his,* but belongs at the last to the cosmic whole that made him. Then one adds that man is free because he can determine his life by the idea of a purpose; but here, again, the crucial question is, *What in the last resort determines this purpose?* The reply is that it is determined by the character of one's heredity and environment; and the "inner necessity" of the individual is finally reduced to outer necessity. So that a man's purpose is not really his own, any more than he himself is his own.

Thus, the determinist's desperate alternative to freedom of choice fails simply because it is a freedom that vanishes as soon as it is analyzed, leaving nothing but freedom's empty name. The failure of this desperate alternative again throws us back upon freedom of choice itself as the freedom we want, the freedom we must have for a moral order; and the freedom we can readily have, so far as any final proofs against it are concerned. Even many of those

who cling to the desperate alternative just reviewed admit that for a moral order one must have the *sense* of freedom of choice anyway, although one cannot really choose. Yes, one must have the *sense* of freedom of choice, even if things as they really are utterly belie it; for without it one can never feel the sense of moral responsibility absolutely essential to any sense of morals. And men must perforce have a sense of morals, a sense of good and bad, of right and wrong. To be a human being is to think in these terms; to be a human being is to act with the sense of freedom of choice; to survive morally is to possess it.

Accordingly, one may successfully challenge anybody who is a member of a moral order *not* to believe that he has freedom of choice while he lives in the practical world of action and does not merely theorize. We all have to believe it practically, whether our abstract speculations approve it or not.

One may assent to this. One may agree that one has to act *as though* he had freedom of choice; one has to *think* that he is free to choose when he loses himself in the world of deeds. Yet one may add that the great question still remains, Has one the freedom of choice he believes he has? Is it not only a necessary *belief*,—not a necessary *truth*? The answer is that it is indeed a necessary truth if ever there was any. For to say that one cannot help believing a thing without contradiction is to have already attained the ultimate test of all truth! That is

just what an uncontrovertible truth is,—something that we cannot deny without contradiction! The moral aspiration is as real as we are real; it certainly is as real as the aspiration for science is real; and if, as scientists, we may consider a hypothesis proved if to deny it is to make science impossible; so, as moral beings, we may consider a hypothesis proved if to deny it is to make the moral life impossible. And freedom of choice is just such a hypothesis. It may be answered, "But universal determinism is just such a hypothesis too for science." So you have on your hands two contradictory hypotheses, equally proved! I answer: "I deny that universal determinism is a necessary hypothesis of science; I have already urged that the *necessary* hypothesis for science is that there are some universal uniformities in nature; not that there is nothing but universal uniformities,—however convenient it may be to assume so for science's special search."

So the necessary hypotheses of science and of morals do not conflict; one can conceive of a world containing scientific uniformities, and yet containing within it freedom of alternatives. But even if it unfortunately happened that freedom of choice conflicted with the necessary hypotheses of science, and that we had thus the tragic choice between destroying the moral life on the one hand, or scientific activity on the other, which would we choose? I think that the last thing that we would relinquish is the

reality of the moral life; for the moral meaning of life is the heart of its reality, and even science is one of the servants of its everlasting purposes. Still, if some one is so exclusively devoted to scientific hypotheses that he can see nought else in life; and if he says: "We cannot bribe our convictions even by the fair world you have so fondly molded to your heart's desire. We cannot refuse truth because it shatters some dreams, or seems to bode us ill, or seems to infringe upon the ultimate reality of favorite conceptions. Yea, even should the truth destroy us, yet will we trust in truth!" If some one says this, I merely reply, "If the truster be slain, how then may he trust?" Truth that destroys every value of life betrays life; it is not truth, but a semblance.

VIII

So far as nature is concerned, man may claim his freedom. But how can he be free from the will of God? This is an ancient question, and our argument cannot conclude without meeting it. For the final solution of whether man is the master of his fate rests upon the nature of the total universe, of which man, with both his morals and his science, is but a part. Now, in the last chapter, the bolder outlines of a theory of the total universe were ventured. The Totality of Things was finally conceived as a Life, fulfilling itself through an infinite series of

deeds that progress more and more toward the ideal that is the goal of every man. But the trouble we found at the end of our quest for God was that man's freedom seemed grievously imperiled. If God is All, man is only a part; and if only a part, all that he is and does seems to be absolutely determined by that Life which is not his, but which possesses and engulfs him. The theory we reached appears to reduce man to God, and so to lose man in God. It seems to belong to that interminable succession of philosophic views that find a solution of all problems in the One Reality, the One and Sole Being, the Absolute, that lies behind the innumerable and diverse phenomena of the world, and thus determines all else either by its efficient causation, or by its own purpose ruling all things imperiously. If the individual is ultimately reducible to One and All, as such philosophies and some religions seem to imply, then there is only one being that is not extraneously determined, and that is the One and All, who alone is self-determined and free. Thus it seems that if we escape total determination by nature, we do so only by surrendering to a total determination by God. For try as you may to put man independently outside of God, you find logical difficulties that are insuperable. All historic attempts of this character tend to reduce man back to God by principles latent in them; or, they end in irrational chaos, which is the same as reducing them to nought. This is not a solution of reality, but its dissolution. For human

reason simply must think of the universe as a unity, and however you conceive of that unity, man, the mere part, seems to be helpless in its presence. He is not free.

It is odd that men should argue thus. For suppose we fully admit that man is a mere part of the universal Life that is God? The question of the freedom of a part is not solved by merely calling attention to the fact that it is part of a whole. The vital question is, Just what is the *relation* subsisting between the part called man and the whole called God? There are several possible ways of conceiving this relation. If the relation is this,—that at some moment in some remote time God created and forced man to be what he is, of course man is not free. What he does is the result of what he was made; and for what he was made, God is to be held responsible. But suppose we avoid any such notion in whatever form it is put, and conceive of man as uncreated and coeternal with and in God. In that case, man can no longer blame God for what he is, any more than God can hold man responsible for what He is. Neither created the other; both are from everlasting to everlasting, as our immortality asserts. Nor am I lost in God; nay, in Him I find myself; for his Life is the Life I seek in my imperfection. And I freely seek it; for I seek it from my own nature, for which no one else is responsible, since I, with all others, including God, always was. Yes, my will is indeed God's will; but my will can

be the same as His without His will's being imposed upon me, just as His will may be mine, without mine being imposed upon God. No one other than myself is accountable for my deed; the approval or disapproval of it is truly the praise or blame of myself as the preponderant source of it. I create my life. I realize myself in my own way through myself. Even the laws of nature are precisely the means and material of that total Life I seek, the Life that includes them and all that is.

But one more question remains. How can freedom of choice be if the total universe has to be thought of as a harmony, involving that each item in it, and so each deed that a man can do, no matter what, is exactly what it ought to be, since it belongs to a rational whole where everything is in its place, where nothing can be otherwise, without marring the universe? Is it not true that, in the long run, even admitting life's countless sins—its lies and thefts and murders—each deed fits in with all the rest, so that freedom of choice would mean to change predestined deeds that belong just where they are in the universal scheme of things?

Well, suppose it to be true that the universal Life, when it is thought of as complete, does find a proper place for every deed that man has done. They can still be deeds that were freely chosen, can they not?—unless you hold that your universe can be made rationally harmonious only with a chain of

certain particular deeds and no others? But why not think of your universe as having alternative harmonies? The one fixed thing, morally, is that, in the long run, every deed, whatever it is, must be so adjusted to every other deed that, seen as a total, the universe at last is completely good in the final triumph of the right. But this does not mean that only certain deeds can be done in it and no others. It merely means that whatever deed I do freely choose, it morally obligates me to choose other deeds that go with it, if I am true to my moral ideals, as in the long run I must be. Thus, I can freely choose to keep my promise or to break it; but having once freely chosen, my other deeds shall relate themselves to this choice. If I freely break my promise, I must freely atone for it by deeds I would not have done had I been honorable. The moral universe is a world of progressive adjustments and readjustments. My future life is partially determined by the choices I have already freely made. There is never a time when I can free myself from the choices of yesterday; and yet there is never a time when I cannot transfigure them, redeem them, by new choices. Our freedom extends even to the past. It is not true that our yesterdays are "irrevocable," as we so often say. Even in nature, every succeeding event transforms and illumines the meaning of all events that happened before. The future is no more a product of the past than the past is the inexorable product of the

infinite and free future. All belongs to the free and eternal choices still within man's power.

We cannot, indeed, recall the past that is behind any specific present; but it is only a past thus arbitrarily isolated that is fixed. The *real* past is a flowing whole, and we are forever pouring the future into the flood, through the gate of the present. Our past is really always *changing*, and it is we who initiate the change; and so the past, though no *part* of it can be recalled, is perpetually being re-created and transformed, now for the worse, now for the better, as its whole goes on unfolding. But the whole it is within the compass of our freedom to bring into fuller and fuller harmony with our active vision of our Ideal, in which at source the freedom consists.[2]

A thief chooses to steal. The fact that he stole is a fact forever. It is irrevocable. But now he repents of his deed. And lo, the deed is no longer what it was; it is changed, transformed. It is no longer the deed of an unrepentant thief, as it was; henceforth, it is to be newly defined as the deed of a thief who repented. It was a repentant thief that the Nazarene forgave.

The total universe will keep to its harmonious pattern in spite of our free choices, yes, because of them, for the simple reason that we men are not only fundamentally free, but fundamentally rational. This is the ultimate limit of all our freedom of choice,—that, in the final issue, we cannot and will not violate ourselves as rational beings that seek and

[2] George Holmes Howison, *The Limits of Evolution and Other Essays*, 1st edition, pp. 379-380.

demand a rational sum of all the thoughts and acts that make up life's infinite whole.

As we grow older, it sometimes seems as though our past choices tyrannize over us more and more. We are no longer so free as we were when we were young, with our decisive choices still unmade. And yet, in the deepest sense, if we have lived a growing life, our range of choices is becoming wider and more various with every day. For our knowledge of life is ever increasing, and life's alternatives are more numerous as our vision widens. The chances a wise man sees are more various than attend the narrower vision of youth. To grow is to become freer, not less free. Culture increases life's possibilities and our command over them. This wider freedom is infinitely in the future of every man.

IX

Our mastery of fate is in our hands. Our moral faith is secure. Our solution rests upon the moral interpretation of what science's total universe means; what God and man ultimately are, without challenging science's world of uniformities, so far as science has determined them, or needs them. And in making this interpretation, we have not encroached unbecomingly upon a problem really belonging to science; for no science even pretends to interpret the universe in its totality.

Finally, this solution is not the denial of determinism in the universe in the interests of freedom; but it is the rational conciliation of determinism and freedom. One may be a determinist in all that the notion demands without waging an eternal warfare upon freedom, finding compatibility only by letting determinism devour freedom, as my saying was. We can now see that extreme determinism and indeterminism both hang themselves, if given enough rope. Extreme determinism dissolves itself because it contradicts every moral fact of man's nature. Extreme indeterminism likewise refutes itself, for it turns out to be mere chaos.

Every thoroughgoing investigation of the problem of freedom must inevitably lead to the somewhat unfamiliar regions whither our search has led us,—to those ultimate and fascinating questions of the fundamental nature of human personality, and the final meaning of that great Nature which is our home. Short of facing these problems, the question of freedom can never be solved. And, viewing your world and yourself within the final meanings that we have uncovered, you will, if I am right, have come upon the heart and soul of the faith that makes for moral valor,—a faith that you are truly free

> By this main miracle that thou art thou,
> With power on thine own act and on the world.

These are your alternatives: morals with freedom of choice, or no morals. Take your choice. But

remember, whichever way you choose, it is quite possible that you are exercising the very freedom of choice that we have been discussing. And in doing so, you shall be held morally responsible!

PART III

PRESENT TENDENCIES TOWARD MORAL FAITH

CHAPTER X

THE MORAL ORDER AS DEMOCRACY

TRUTH, like life, is "a dome of many-colored glass." If one looks only at the separate colors of truth's infinite variety, one is lost in a detail that gives no total vision. Color by color, fragment by fragment, we have been finding life's truths, and have been busy putting them in their separate places. We may now survey the finished dome. When viewed in its completed wholeness, it not only stains but reveals, albeit dimly, "the white radiance" of life's meaning in its fullness.

Through the contemporary conflict of ideals and its resulting moral skepticism we came upon a solution; a solution that announced that the conflicting ideals of what men strive for do not really exclude one another, although they ever seem so to do; that all these conflicting ideals imply a moral end which includes them every one, and transcends them every one; that this all-inclusive ideal is to be regarded as the true moral standard that ever remains the same amid all moral change; that this ideal is the expression of the imperative desire of all human beings that all human desires, so far as may be, shall be fulfilled,—the inalienable desire for total

self-realization, for fullness of life. This is life's first, its fundamental verity. We further found that if this ideal is but vaguely defined, it is but natural, since part of our moral growth is the increasing definition of its goal as we advance. We also made it clear that since each partial ideal implies all the rest, the supreme need of men is the moral confidence to seek whatever ideal seems best to each man, with the knowledge that if one seeks seriously and rationally any one of the ideals of moral manhood, he will emerge upon the others in due time; that what we need most of all, therefore, is precisely this moral faith, this undefeatable moral idealism that does seek without wavering and without betrayal.

We soon discovered that this moral faith is not a simple thing for reasonable men. For such men it can be no matter of mere sentiment, but must be grounded in a large conviction of what man and his world fundamentally are. And in spite of the dogmatism of science, which at times has seemed to threaten man's every moral possession, and through a better understanding of science's limits and the logical rights of the moral order, of which science is only a part, we have come gradually and surely to the three verities that alone can give life a meaning without contradiction,—the three immemorial verities of Immortality, God, and Freedom, rescued from the reasons that have become faulty to the modern mind, and made newly cogent

by reasons that meet an honest modern criticism. The truths that have fashioned so many great men and great civilizations rise again with renewed power to solve a new world's problems and to build a new world-order.

But in spite of all that we have done, our vision is not yet intimate enough, warm enough, not yet near enough to our concrete life as we actually live it. We must gather the truths that we have reached into a perspective that will appeal to the imagination, relate it more directly to to-day's world, reveal the immediate obstacles to its realization, and discover what actual tendencies toward it are present in our civilization, now rife with so many significant changes.

For us men, the central, the most practical concern in any view of the world is what sort of being man himself really is. What is his significance in the scheme of things? What are his ultimate worth, his chances, his legitimate hopes? In what light is he to regard himself when all is said and done?

Fortunately, our study of the great verities has revealed a great deal about what man is and how he must henceforth think of himself if his civilization is to be made of reasonable service to him. Unequivocally, it is in terms of these discovered truths of what men really are that all institutions of the new régime must be reformed and redirected. Just what, then, are these truths about you and me and all of us that we have gained, and that are to

furnish the needed incentive for the efficient beginnings of the ideal moral order?

Here it is that we come upon a momentous fact. These truths about the nature of men and society are no more or less than what are proclaimed by that greatest of modern movements called democracy!

For modern democracy, too, is fundamentally a vision concerning what men really are. It, too, announces man's ultimate worth, his chances, and his legitimate hopes. And it does so by the distinct truths that all men are to be regarded as equal and free; as of infinite worth and capable of endless growth; as inalienably social; and as inalienably rational, the capable source of their own intellectual authority.[1] These are the fighting points of modern democracy. These, too, are precisely the truths about men that our study of the great verities has revealed and justified.

Briefly, and viewing democracy's premises one by one, let us see that this is so.

If democracy insists that men are to be regarded as capable of endless growth, never to be arbitrarily arrested by the barriers of caste or the closed doors of opportunity, so does the ideal moral order that the great verities have given us. "Whoever you are, to you endless announcements!" The very nature of the moral ideal already insists upon it, man's relation to God proclaims it, and man's ever-

[1] *Cf.* the author, *The College and New America*, pp. 126 ff.

lasting chance is already affirmed in his immortality.

If democracy proclaims men to be of infinite value, so does the moral order we have attained. If man is infinite in his moral reach, he is infinite in his moral worth, just as democracy knows him to be. For neither in democracy, nor in the moral order as we now see it, are men like commodities whose worth can be appraised. Rather are they that for which all values exist. That which is itself the end or purpose of all uses cannot in turn be used and evaluated according to its use; that which is the measure of every value is not itself subject to a measure of degrees of value. Now, this is exactly what men are; not things to be used and valued in finite degrees, but the ends for which all values exist, and so the criteria of all values. All men are thus of incalculable value,—this is the thesis of any genuine moral order. Under no circumstances can they depreciate in terms of finite degrees of worth.

This conception of the moral order is akin to Kant's famous conception of a Kingdom of Ends, in which every person is both citizen and sovereign. Such a conception further agrees with Kant in its fundamental distinction between persons and mere things; things may be used, but persons are to be revered as ends in themselves. This is the reason why human slavery of any sort is a contradiction; unless, indeed, one can successfully deny that the slave is a person!

If democracy asserts the great truth of man's essential equality, so does the view of life that our truths have so far given us. For both alike, just because *each* man is of supreme value, no man is of any more value than another. This is what we mean when we say men are equal. Speaking concretely, it is this truth that is the basis of the right of equal sovereignty. Equality before the law is also a corollary of it. Inequality of civil rights, the sanction of any sort of special privilege (except for temporary expediency) would mean that not all men are of incalculable worth, but that some of them can be graded and rejected. Equality of worth also carries with it equality of opportunity, not only before the institution of law, but before every institution that the moral order creates. "I will accept nothing which all cannot have their counterpart of on the same terms." For the doctrine of equal possibilities without that of equal opportunity would be a mockery. Professor Dewey insists, after Lowell, upon "the form of society in which every man has a chance and knows that he has it—and we may add, a chance to which no possible limits can be put, a chance which is truly infinite, the chance to become a person. Equality, in short, is the ideal of humanity."[2] President Butler also emphasizes the ethical obligation to give equal opportunities to all, declaring that the true social order

[2] John Dewey, *The Ethics of Democracy*, p. 25. (University of Michigan Philosophical Papers, Second Series, No. 1.)

cries, "All men up to the height of their fullest capacity for service and achievement."[3]

If democracy looks upon men as social by nature, with inalienable social obligations and rights,—well, we too have found that each man's life includes the life of his fellows. For the ideal of the moral order has been revealed as the commonly shared ideal of all men, which unites them all in one common purpose and makes the moral interest of all the interest of each and every one.

And, finally, if democracy regards men as free, we too have come upon the real meaning of this same freedom in the power of each man freely to choose his life in some measure. This has been vindicated as necessary for moral faith, and has been guaranteed in such a way as to violate no proved scientific uniformity, lifting man to an assured place of moral accountability. Practically, any moral order must recognize this freedom, not only as man's possibility but as his overt right. Yes, the bounds of freedom must be steadily enlarged by removing all impediments to freedom of thought, of speech, of decision, so far as this is compatible with the equal freedom of all men. And by opportunities of education this same freedom must grow constantly more rational and so more safe. For, with democracy, the moral order regards each man as fundamentally rational and so the capable and ultimate source of his own convictions.

[3] Nicholas Murray Butler, *True and False Democracy*, p. 15.

These truths, then, at which we have arrived turn out to be the supreme practical challenges of the day, not merely theoretical vagaries! For these very truths it is that we urge that democracy be made safe. The ideal moral order and democracy are one and the same. So that whether or not we agree with the reasonings that have led to the vision of the moral order, it is on our hands anyway in the name of democracy, the one world-ideal in which men now resolutely put their ultimate trust! Out of the great verities comes democracy. And this is fortunate. For the only guarantee of democracy's ultimate success is a downright faith that it is not only desirable, but the only justifiable moral order; that man and his world are fundamentally so made that democracy is the only reasonable choice.

But this is only part of the truth about democracy as a moral order. For if the great verities call for democracy, it is equally a fact that democracy, in turn, calls strenuously for the great verities and includes them as an actual part of its practical program when democracy is made consciously complete. If the moral order is the verification of democracy, democracy itself, carried to its logical conclusion, becomes in turn the supreme vindication of the truths men live by!

We cannot evade ultimate questions if we would. Carry the logic of the simplest truth far enough, and we arrive at the big questions with which great minds have lived since men began to seek what

life means. Even the scientist often finds himself led by the logic of his physics, his astronomy, his chemistry, away from its narrow confines to where the larger questions await and imperatively call for solution, if only for the sake of his special science. He cannot speak daily of such things as Space and Time and Energy and Motion without being led some day, if he be a thoughtful man, to a consideration of their deeper nature and larger significance. So it is with the moral order called democracy.

For instance, one cannot announce the measureless capacities of democracy's man with full truth unless one is also willing to imply that possibility of infinite progress which we call immortality. The alleged social nature of democracy's man can be made finally intelligible only in a world where the moral ideal includes all one's fellows and is the same for all of them,—the ideal that has been shown to be the God of our struggle, in whom men verily live and move and have their being. One cannot successfully maintain the freedom of democracy's man unless one holds that at the last he is free from the compulsion that is resident in every view of the world that makes him the mere helpless product of physical causes, or of a Will that engulfs him; and just this freedom of self-activity, expressed in a freedom of choice which renders us the masters of our fates, has been already interpreted and, I think, justified. One can insist without vanity upon the infinite and equal value of democracy's man only in

view of those things that give him infinite value,—his social inclusion of all, his underived nature, and his chance endlessly to achieve infinite values. Democracy's belief in the rational nature of man implies the rational nature of the world he seeks to conquer, and is itself a corollary of any real freedom to conquer it. And the fullness of life that he finds himself seeking—a life transcending momentary desires and all narrower moral ideals—is vindicated only in the moral ideal whose abundance is the richness of God Himself, the Goal that includes every value for which men fight, that perfection of Truth and Beauty and Goodness which is the interpretation of all the genuine progress of civilization. Yes, the final vindication of the meaning of democracy's man is found only in the three great verities; of a surety, they are the truths he lives by! And of all the tendencies toward the concrete realization of these larger truths of democracy, the most important is the tendency toward *belief* in them, because such belief is logically and practically first. First of all, the Kingdom of Heaven must be within you, or you will never be able to project it into the world outside you. The progress of democracy must ever include a growing apprehension of what democracy is and implies.

But if this is so, the practical question is whether democracy now exhibits any appreciable tendency toward such an understanding faith. And in answering this question, one resorts to those move-

ments more intimately concerned with the things of the spirit, such as the literary, educational, and religious tendencies of our time. Of these three movements, the religious is obviously the most significant as naturally and almost exclusively entrusted with a people's ultimate faiths. To this we now turn.

CHAPTER XI

MORAL CONFIDENCE AND RELIGION

Of the many ways by which men attain convictions concerning the moral order, the commonest is the religious way. In our everyday lives we see the world as a series of isolated events, often set over against each other in conflict. Religion furnishes what "the ideal unity of our consciousness demands, a perfectly harmonious and intelligible universe." There is a "want of completeness in our lives, a want of poetic justice in our fates. It is chiefly on this side that religion touches on ethics." [1] Or, as Perry expresses it in discussing the moral value of religion: "Religion promulgates the idea of life as a whole, and composes and proportions its activities with reference to their ultimate end. Religion advocates not the virtues in their severalty, but the whole moral enterprise." [2]

I

There is little doubt that religion owes its very rise as well as its continued existence to the need

[1] J. S. Mackenzie, *Manual of Ethics*, p. 444.
[2] Ralph Barton Perry, *The Moral Economy*, p. 253.

for faith in the moral order. From one point of view—perhaps the best point of view—religion might be defined as faith in those great verities that make a moral order possible. Its origin comes of the oldest cry of reflective minds, doubtful amid the maze of events and the manifold mysteries of life, "What must I do to be saved?" Saved from what? Saved from the wrong and saved to the right; saved from the triumph of the bad and saved to the victory of the good. It means a cry for certainty amid uncertainty, a demand for verities that beget moral confidence. Of this demand have arisen all the significant faiths of religion; just as even an atheist, meeting a sudden crisis that for the first time reaches down to the very foundations of his being, may all at once find himself crying, *de profundis,* "O my God!" To say with Matthew Arnold that "religion is morality touched with emotion" is to say truth; but the saying is made complete if we add that religion is morality inspired by a vision of life in its wholeness. When first a human being, afflicted with a conscience and doubtful of the right, yes, doubtful even of his fealty to the right, and facing the moral tragedy of his spirit, saved himself from moral oblivion by seizing boldly such everlasting verities as would preserve the world as a moral order, then was religion born. In this practical way is it ever born, so far as it is a living faith. Religion is not at all a product of speculation or dream or sentiment; it may be false from crypt

to spire, but it is the definitely practical outcome of man's most practical needs.

It is with such a view of religion as the heart of moral faith that Tennyson presents the spiritual crisis of the reflective modern in the *Two Voices*. This poem is a debate within a man's soul between moral faith and modern scientific reason, faith in the moral order and the reasons that marshal themselves against it. The voice of doubt cries,

> Thou art so full of misery
> Were it not better not to be?

Is man so wonderfully made? In the boundless universe, with its hundred million spheres, there are boundless better than man. Is each man priceless, since no two are alike? Well, what makes us differ is only our differing defects. Shall we abide on earth to view truth's progress? But the goal of truth is endless and the passing seasons, yea, the millenniums, make little difference in our futile search. It is better not to seek at all than "seem to find but still to seek." The youthful dream to fight the false is but a "stirring of the blood."

Thus goes the debate in the man's soul. How does he solve his moral doubt? He has found some reasons for the integrity of his ideals through change and death, but they grant him no absolute conviction. What is it that finally brings moral confidence, the faith that makes life possible? Nothing but the ultimate need of it, which proceeds boldly

to transcend all inconclusive theory. Leaving his vexed and futile musings, he opens his casement to the sabbath morn. He hears the church bells ringing. He sees men and women following their call, among them one who walks between his wife and child. And thus, facing the world of normal, practical experience, a voice that solves his problems speaks within him; a voice that says, assuring him, "I see the end, and know the good"; a voice that "may not speak" of what it knows, save that it is "a hidden hope." Faith in the moral order has been begotten of moral conflict. The great verities have been reborn of the moral demands of the spirit. This is religion.

The religious way of obtaining moral confidence may be the wrong way and its customary beliefs erroneous. But however that may be, religion is to be regarded as ultimately the direct outcome of a moral demand, and is to be justified fully in terms of morals and only in terms of morals. Historically, and even now, religion often misses this truth. But the moment that it forgets that its main service is for the triumph of righteousness and not for the triumph of mere doctrine, that moment it degenerates into formalism, dogmatism, and fruitlessness.

The close relation between these religious verities on the one hand and moral confidence on the other is shown by the marked reciprocal influences of religion and morals in every age. The purification of one

means the purification of the other. Their fortunes are inextricably related. "Religion is a conservative agency, yet a new religion often has a powerful influence on moral development."[3] The heavens of the religions are reflections, however remote, of the ideals of life held by those who believe in them. Contrast the heaven of Mohammedanism with that of Christianity, and one has a key to the much deeper contrast between their moral conceptions of what life should be. The attributes of God that any age vitally sanctions are expressions of the attributes it approves as great in its men and women. The gods of Greece were only Greeks of more titanic mold. This is not to say that the gods are man-made, whatever that may mean; but that the God of a religion is likely to be the supreme expression of the moral ideal of its time and tends profoundly to influence moral ideals in turn. Is God conceived to be the only ultimate reality, as in some Oriental religions? Then, morally, one will find that the individual ceases his futile strivings, annihilates his desires, and makes his moral goal the losing of himself in the infinite sea of Being. On the other hand, is God thought of not as engulfing us, but as the one perfect self in a democracy of souls? Then the moral ideal of the individual urges him not to lose himself, but to fulfill himself to the utmost. The life of the ancient Hebrews was a conspicuous example of the close interrelation of morals and re-

[3] Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, p. 81.

ligion. The Hebrew covenant was primarily a religious covenant; but it had an immense significance for the moral development of the Hebrew people. The central conceptions of Christianity are considered worth while in terms of their power to make for righteousness. Jesus is not primarily a theological dogma, but a moral ideal; his "kingdom" is not so much a theory to be believed as a goal to be sought. And not only do the beliefs of a religion mold the morals of its period, but the moral ideals of a time vitally remold its religion.

It is for these reasons that, in the last resort, faith in a moral order, even that of democracy, means a religious faith. It is the eventual recognition of this yet unappreciated fact that is to transfigure the religion of this Western World. World-old is the supposition that one may be moral and yet not be religious. Centuries old is the counter plea that morality *is* religion. Immanuel Kant showed that to be good and to be religious are one and the same thing; and this was the sane plea of our own Emerson's gospel in song, in essay, and in life until he was laid to rest under that mountain rock. His most indignant objection to the religion of his day was that it should even dream of divorcing religion from morality. Slaveholding to him was immoral; so a slaveholding religion was to him a most pitiable thing. He commended Theodore Parker most of all for insisting, as he had insisted, that the very essence of Christianity is practical morals. "Mere

morality," some of the theologians exclaimed; but back came Emerson's keen thrust, "Men talk of 'mere morality,' which is much as if one should say, 'Poor God, with nobody to help Him.'" He exclaims in his essay on Poetry: "The moral law lies at the center of nature and radiates to the circumference. It is the pith and marrow of every substance, every relation and every process." He felt and repeatedly proclaimed that "the sentiment of virtue is the essence of all religion."[4]

II

If the religion of a people must not be abstracted from the moral order for which it exists, but must be the adequate sanction and justification of that order, an important question confronts us: How far can one honestly say that the religious tendencies of to-day are toward a rational moral faith,—toward democracy and the verities that make it reasonably possible?

It is an immediately significant fact that the religious institution itself has been caught between our age's contradictions until it has had to struggle for its very life. We have spoken of the current contradictions of reason and faith, pragmatism and idealism, hedonism and sacrifice, individualism and social responsibility. Well, these contradictions

[4] *Vid.* the author, *The Religion of Emerson*, Sewanee Review, April, 1920.

may have nothing else in common, but they all agree in attacking current religion, each in its own way. Thus, from the standpoint of reason, religion is currently criticized as irrational, dogmatic, antagonistic to science, and, at any rate, remote from the other intellectual interests of mankind; from the standpoint of faith, it is criticized as halting, unaggressive, living in the past, and lacking the large spirit of the divine adventure. From the standpoint of the practical, religion tends to be regarded as useless, a mere theology and creed, with no vital and practical influence upon the currents of present-day life; from the standpoint of idealism, nonprogressive and reactionary. By the hedonist, traditional religion is looked upon as enjoining meaningless sacrifice, mortification of the flesh, and as denying the modern conception of fullness of life; by the spirit of sacrifice, as too hedonistic, saving the soul to a heaven whose inducement is happiness, a second-rate motive. To the individualist, the current institution of religion appears tyrannical, encroaching upon his sacred liberty of thought; to the earnest social reformer it seems indifferent to social issues of moral import, engrossed in the selfish business of saving individual souls and, so far as it is social at all, expressing the class spirit, exclusive, a sort of social club with no well planned social enterprise or appeal. Caught between these merciless contradictions is the religious institution of to-day until it is made to appear as much of a mass of

paradoxes as is the age that evaluates it and finds its own faults in it!

When the great verities are challenged thus through their chief institution, the challenge cannot be ignored. It presents a problem that must be solved, else the great verities perish; or, at any rate, the great organization that has so zealously guarded them will fall into disrepute among intelligent men. Religion has not made the fatal mistake of ignoring the challenge; but its leaders have very often fallen into an error almost equally disastrous,—that of naïvely regarding these contradictory criticisms as imperative "demands of the times," and of attempting straightway to fulfill them. The attempt is disastrous because these imperative demands are indeed contradictory demands, and any attempt to meet them naïvely breeds still more contradiction. Further, the attempt to formulate religion according to the "demands of the times," if carried out too literally, means that religion loses its proper function; instead of being the vanguard of civilization, it is degraded into the position of a mere camp follower. The business of religion, with its great verities, is not to adapt itself to civilization so much as to transform it. But so far as religion has lately attempted to meet the world, it has tended to overadapt itself to its environment; and, alas, the attempt to satisfy all its critics pleases none. For instance, in meeting the demand for religion's rational revision upon a scientific basis, men have come peril-

ously near to losing their faith in the eternal values. In attempting to be practical, religion has tended to lose its spirituality. In recognizing the rights of the pleasures of this life, religion has tended to lose the old heroic loyalties. And in answering the cry for individual liberty, religion has tended to elide the imperatives of the social conscience. Men have met these contradictions with too little analysis of what they mean; the result is more contradictions, which can satisfy no one of the standpoints of criticism because the attempt has been made uncritically to satisfy them all. The problem has been falsely conceived; so the solution has solved nothing.

The challenges of our time must be met in a new way, not only by religious institutions, but by all men and women to whom the moral order and its insistent verities are real. The task is not to meet these conflicting tendencies of our age severally and separately, but to analyze them and solve them by an interpretation of life that conciliates them until they vanish in a new moral vision. Only thus will the great verities, as well as the men and institutions that guard them, cease to be apart from today's world and become an intimate portion of its inner life. Our previous discussions make it clear how this is to be done with reference to the conflict between hedonism and sacrifice as well as to that between society and the individual. But the current conflict between reason and faith, which has been one of our central problems, is the one that

religion must now especially face as a condition of any further usefulness.

Reason and faith have been warring so long and so bitterly that they seem to be inherently irreconcilable. Their interests have been different, their motives at variance, and their methods mutually contradictory. Yet a logician, unprejudiced by tradition, will see no reason why they should be everlastingly separated and at conflict. One's reason and faith are indeed eternally separated on the condition that one's reason is dogmatic, ignorant of its nature and limits, and that one's faith insists upon being blind. And, as we have shown, human reason has been abundantly dogmatic, especially within the era dominated by modern science. This dogmatism, as we have seen, has shown itself in the assumption that reason and natural science are synonymous; that what scientific demonstration cannot prove is thereby outside proof. But our discussion has revealed the mistake of this assumption; when critically challenged, it breaks down. Natural science is not all of reason; there are facts other than the physical facts of natural science, and there are other methods just as cogent as its methods of gaining truth.

And if scientific reason does not need to be dogmatic, neither need faith be blind. What do we mean by faith in the last analysis? The essence of faith is confidence in and loyalty to certain ultimate truths deemed necessary for life. So the chief ob-

jects of faith are what are required to make a moral order possible, namely, the moral ideal, Immortality, God, and the Freedom of the Soul. Now, one's faith in these verities may be blind in one of two senses; it may be a faith that contradicts known facts, or it may be a faith which, while not contradicting any known facts, possess no positive reasons to support it. Faith concerns itself with "things unseen"; but it must be an "evidence" of things unseen; and for the things it hopes for, it must offer some substance; never may it be a mere assumption grasped from the upper air. Already it has been shown how faith in the great verities may find its reasonable evidences without contradicting a single fact or law of science. Even science itself has such faiths, the loyalties to its assumptions, hypotheses in harmony with every scientific fact and law, or they would not be legitimate hypotheses; yet assumptions not proved by the facts so far ascertained; pleading as their only proof that if they were not, science could not be. This is faith, but it is not blind. So we find a new concept that is neither dogmatic reason nor blind faith, namely, the concept of Rational Faith,—a faith in harmony with reason, and interpretive rather than destructive of the meaning of science. Indeed, we can go further now. Faith merely by itself, or reason merely by itself each contradicts not only the other, but itself! For reason, as in science, needs its great assumptions of faith before it can begin; and faith needs

its reasons before it has a right to speak. The ancient contradiction is solved, and each side of the contradiction is immeasurably enriched. With such a conception regnant within it, religion is no longer caught between two fires that destroy it; it no longer sins against either faith or reason, for it answers its critics with the Rational Faith that conciliates both in a new outlook upon life.

III

And now to revert to our original question: How far can one truly say that the religious tendencies of our day are toward faith in the moral order as we have defined it,—toward that democracy which issues at last in the great verities, and without which these same verities are practically useless?

Take first democracy's doctrine of the priceless worth of men. The religious tendency has sometimes seemed utterly out of sympathy with this characteristically Occidental view. It has often appeared to submerge the individual and to depreciate him. Yet, in spite of this, the plain tendency of religion to-day is toward an emphasis upon the dignity and worth of the individual human soul, whose value is regarded as such that it would not profit a man to exchange it for the whole world. This new evaluation of the individual by religion is shown by the increasingly larger freedom and responsibility accorded him, yes, thrust upon him, in the name of religion itself. The individual no longer is so pas-

sive in his piety; his salvation depends more upon himself and upon his own deeds. Thus, the pulpit of to-day emphasizes ethics as the thing to be preached in the name of religion, rather than doctrine and ceremonial. This tendency toward an ethical interpretation of religion, which emphasizes the individual's coöperative part in his own salvation to righteousness, was already beginning when this generation was young. Bryce, scanning our religious institutions a number of years ago, said: "It is hard to state any general view as to the substance of pulpit teaching, because the differences between different denominations are marked; but the tendency has been, and daily grows alike among Congregationalists, Baptists, Northern Presbyterians, and Episcopalians, for sermons to be less metaphysical and less markedly doctrinal than formerly, and to become either expository, or else of practical and hortatory character."[5] Émile Faguet, writing in *Les Annales* of the various sects in America, could say, "They may be innumerable, but they are all alike," meaning by this that while their doctrines vary surprisingly, their public teachings agree in being predominantly practical, and may be reduced almost to moral teachings and, particularly, moral actions. The very fact that some people nowadays give as an excuse for not attending or joining the church, the alleged uncertain conduct or hypocrisy of a few church members, is a significant indication

[5] James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth*, Chap. CXI.

of how closely true religion and the individual's responsibility for his own life are associated in the public mind.

This same democratic importance of the individual is shown by the increasing freedom accorded him to think his own religious thoughts. Not only has the old intolerance given way to tolerance, but men are actually being encouraged to think out their own convictions as a right, not as something to be merely passively or grudgingly permitted. Of late there has been a notable decline in the number of trials for heresy, due to this same new note of freedom; and the growing fellowship among religious bodies, Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and others, means likewise a partial surrender to the inevitability, if not the desirability, of differences in a nevertheless common religious aim. This fellowship was at no time more marked than during the stress of the recent war, when all kinds of religions learned a new tolerance in a new and splendid practical cooperation. I have a letter before me from a French Catholic priest to an American Protestant, both of whom worked together close to death; a letter which asks a very great question simply, "In this war, should we not consider ourselves as brothers?" and which concludes with the wish for the "union of our prayers in the heart of Jesus." This is only one of the whispers of a world of voices struggling for one utterance.

But this tendency toward the democratic freedom

of the individual does not go so far as to contradict democracy's other doctrine of the rational responsibility of the individual. Freedom is not to be the freedom of caprice. The abstract freedom that insists upon liberty to think in religious matters, and then which ingloriously fails to think at all, has become too notorious, and is being convicted of its emptiness. Free thought means not only freedom to think, but the thinking itself; and the responsibility of the individual to clarify his religion in terms of democracy's reason is evincing itself everywhere in the institutions of religion. Mere dogmatism is passing away; the concept of faith is being purged of its credulity; religion is becoming less remote from other intellectual pursuits and more in sympathy with important secular movements; the intellectual training of the religious leader is being more stressed as higher education has assumed a new importance. Religion is being studied and interpreted in terms of philosophy, psychology, and comparative religion; the old antagonism to natural science is being replaced by a new adjustment to its verified truths; the helplessness before the seeming destructiveness of science is giving way to a new counter challenge to science's dogmatism, in so far as it has invaded matters on which it legitimately has nothing to say; and religion is beginning, through its more educated and expert leaders, to assert its right to such logical methods and conclusions as justify themselves and adjust them-

selves fully to the accepted truths of scientific research. Although not yet obtrusive, this is one of the most hopeful tendencies in current religious thought.

Not only is the religious tendency strongly toward these democratic doctrines of the pricelessness of men, their freedom, and their rationality, but toward the recognition of their measureless possibilities, another doctrine of democracy. There was a time easily within remembrance when this was not so; when religion still persisted in expressing itself chiefly in repressing human nature; when it was negative rather than positive; retroactive rather than progressive. But now the overwhelming tendency is toward fullness of life, as not only an imperative of democracy, but of religion itself. This is the inevitable result of the character of our modern civilization; but especially is it the result, first, of the new emphasis upon the character of Jesus, so far as the Christian world is concerned,—upon Jesus as a life that encourages endless self-realization; it is the result, second, of the versatile stimulus of a many-sided life such as modern times afford; and, third, of the widespread concept of evolution. How this concept has widened men's vision, even unawares, and transformed their outlook upon life,—a life that has gained through it an immeasurable past and an immeasurable future! To the modern man, accustomed to thinking of that long evolutionary process, out of whose dim potentialities the life of

the present came into being, there seems to be in this very "infinite detail of preparation" a "guarantee of ineffable achievement."[6] Even religion has begun to enter into the spirit of the infinite adventure.

And, further, the social responsibilities of democracy are now assuming an all-absorbing place in the religion of to-day's world; to such an extent, indeed, that religion is becoming an essential factor in the socializing of democracy's man. In spite of the class spirit still lingering in some religious institutions, in spite of some prevalent notions of salvation in terms of egoistic hedonism, the main currents are toward a recognition of social issues of moral import and a reaction against these very things that have kept religion from concerning itself with the temporal crises that justly claimed its ethical regard. The books on the social mission of religion are becoming so numerous that no one man could read them all. The salvation of the individual soul has become merged with the salvation of society. The cry of devout men is becoming surprisingly like that of the challenge of an important character of a modern novel, "What doth it profit a man if he save his own soul and lose the whole world, caring nothing for its agony, making no struggle to help in its woe and grieving?"[7]

[6] David Starr Jordan, *The Religion of a Sensible American*, p. 25.
[7] Frances Hodgson Burnett, *The De Willoughby Claim.*

IV

But although the religious tendencies of to-day are strongly toward an awareness of democracy as a moral order, there is yet much lacking in definite tendencies toward the clarification of the three great verities which such an order implies and demands, faith in which it is religion's very especial business to inspire and sustain. Bold and rational sanctions for these truths men live by are not yet sufficiently forthcoming. Clear thinking concerning God, Freedom, and Immortality, which is now demanded by the world's newly awakened moral and religious yearnings, has not yet definitely begun. These verities are still too vague, too unrelated to each other, and altogether too timid for the valorous moral faith that the world in general and democracy in particular now sorely need. For instance, even many of the rationally emancipated still find themselves in Emerson's strange predicament of having on their hands a conception of God that will in no way square with the equally important insistence upon human freedom and responsibility. In one breath, God is all and does all, and men are merged in the "Oversoul," in such a way that "our painful labors are unnecessary and fruitless"; in another breath is championed the kingliness of the human spirit, in an undefeatable self-reliance that cries, "Stand back! this infant soul must learn to walk alone!" In the same way, immortality is yet hardly

more than a splendid dream, practically unrelated to an understood moral ideal for which men strive here and now. And both scientific and religious dogmatism have obscured the problem of freedom altogether, until most men are helpless before it.

This lack of intellectual earnestness with the great verities is due to the want of insight into their really practical importance; to the impression that, from a rational point of view, science has made us more or less intellectually helpless to justify them; and to the want of a sufficient number of intellectual experts in religious movements who are able to challenge unbelief and inconsistency with a bold and comprehensive logic. So the result is that contemporary religion does not yet furnish an adequate sanction for democracy's ethical ideals. But even here the encouraging thing, the significant thing for the future of both religion and democracy, is that the religious institution is unquestionably tending toward democracy's conception of a moral order, which, in turn, implies those verities not now sufficiently evident, and which will eventually and imperatively demand their increasing definition.

The natural overemphasis upon the physical sciences and their tyranny over all the categories of life is on the wane, although it is still arrogant enough and dogmatic enough to need constant refutation by a logic precise and merciless. Many men, in the name of science, but without the sanction of most scientists, still insist upon distorting

scientific fact and law from their place as servants of life's ideals to dictators of what these ideals shall be, to the imminent destruction of the moral order and the logic of its own outraged facts. But such irrational dogmatism cannot last forever. The immemorial empire of reason will not be downed by the revolt of one of its provinces; for, unlike revolts within nations, the over-assumptions of science cannot win by their sheer force, but must submit to the verdict of that very reason which science itself espouses. What this verdict is it has been the venture of this book to show. The philosopher, the poet, and the prophet are only momentarily expelled from civilization; they are already coming again to their own, purged of the follies that made the usurpations of science a triumphant fact. The serious and capable philosopher never found a world more receptive of what he has to say of the nature of man and his universe than is to-day's world of men, made eager for ultimate truths by the perplexing human problems that cry for some solution beyond merely temporary expedients. The poet, who lately felt that the world had slipped utterly from him, and that its ear was no longer attuned to any music but the music of the hammer and forge, now finds a world listening for the rhythm of life's deeper meanings; and the human atmosphere is sentient with the songs of a new springtime of civilization. Literature during and since the World War is rife with these signs of a brooding thought prophetic of

larger perspectives. But it is to the prophet of religion that men's souls are looking most; for it is ever through religion rather than through philosophy and poetry that the average man finds his way to the truths we live by. The predictions of the decline of the religious institution are even more fatuous than the confident assertions that science had permanently crowded poetry and philosophy out of civilization. For the necessity of the religious institution is based upon the social nature of the moral adventure and of religious faith, which ever brings men together for the serious contemplation, discussion, and achievement of its coöperative ideals. Like any other institution, its perennial necessity is founded upon the perennially social nature of democracy's man. Once it has come to a thorough self-consciousness of its ethical purpose and of the specific place of religion in that purpose; once it has thoroughly adjusted itself rationally and whole-heartedly to the secular currents of life that so pitifully require the great verities, it will discover hosts of men, who now think of themselves as heretics and outcasts, ready to join hand and soul in its enterprises, at last made consonant with democracy's own.

CHAPTER XII

THE RENAISSANCE OF MORAL FAITH

That the great verities will find their ultimate triumph in present-day civilization depends upon whether the modern mind is capable of bridging the artificial chasm it has created everywhere between what it calls the merely "theoretical" on the one hand and the "practical" on the other; whether it can apprehend thoroughly that any great truth is a truth to live by, or it is not truth at all; that all "practicalness" but gropes and stumbles that knows not the truth that clarifies. The prevalence of this artificial separation of the theoretical and the practical is obvious enough. The aversion of the contemporary man to "mere theory" is proverbial. The current test of a man's value is said to be not what he "knows," but what he can "do." This is also the stubborn test of the worth of any community. We believe in education; but we say that it must be an education for practical life, or it fails. Thus, the increased place of the applied sciences and of vocational training. As we have seen, even religion finds that it must submit itself to the same practical test if it is to make itself felt in the world. So, in America, discussions of theology tend more and

more to be abandoned for discussions concerning the concrete life. It has already appeared that this practicalness of American life tends to be materialistic. Success of persons as well as of communities tends to be computed upon a basis of material output and intake, something one may add up in a column of figures. So that the contradiction between the theoretical and the practical tends to be a conflict between the practical man and the idealist.

I

The practical man and the idealist,—how they have spurned one another and fought one another in every age! It sometimes seems that the most significant difference in the tempers of men is their natural allegiance to one side of this contradiction or the other. There are ever the dreamers on the one hand, and the men of affairs on the other. Their creeds, their views of life, seem to be in utter conflict, hopeless, irreparable. Yet critically seen, the conflict is not so real as it appears, and it arises, as do many wars, from a misunderstanding.

For observe, what we call the "practical" concerns itself with what is actually to be done here and now, and with what utilities shall be mustered to get imperative deeds accomplished. It has to do with the great problem of "efficiency." It is knowing what to do next and how to do it. But it is stupid to suppose that one can know what to do next,

and next, and next, unless one has a purpose to be achieved by all these deeds,—what we call an ideal. In other words, to have a rational ideal and to be practical must go together. The reason why there has been such a notable conflict in the past is that some so-called idealists have persisted in proposing ideals that were mere dreams, visions not sufficiently based upon the possibilities of human nature and of things as they are. They have been "visionary." Or, idealists have often been content to proclaim ideals without sufficient scrutiny of the ways and means of attaining them. Or, they have been so lost in the rapt contemplation of the ideal that they have unwisely and impossibly demanded its full definition, yes, even its full realization here and now, forgetting that all sure progress is a procession of slow but surely advancing compromises. Such men have earned the name of radicals, and they are ever heroic; but their heroism tends to be more spectacular than effective; it is a bravery that is not tempered by the deeper bravery of patience, the hardest virtue of all.

On the other hand, the temper of the idealist has been antagonized by the pragmatist's overweening insistence upon an efficiency that lacks a sufficient insight into the ends that efficiency must serve. Efficiency has been valued as a thing worth something in itself, as a god in its own right. Or, the pragmatist has made his goals and purposes too immediate, too temporary; they have not reached far

enough into the future; they have tended to be of the earth earthy, and so merely prudential.

But these mistakes do not need to be forever committed by reasonable men, especially when the practical concerns of civilization depend upon coming to a mutual understanding. The moral ideal that has gradually revealed itself in these pages does not make the fatuous error of trying to define itself in its full detail all at once; knowledge of it is a slow growth, and advance toward it is through one step at a time, with the patience of faith in the everlasting progress that it demands. It does not impatiently deny this world and the present deed, but rather interprets them. It is not a mere dream or vision contrary to fact; it is an immortal purpose born of the facts themselves, without which the facts are morally meaningless. The pragmatist's love of efficiency for its own sake and his too temporary purposes need a sound idealism for their correction. In the last issue, this truth comes to one forcefully in contemplating the type of man that the race most approves in its saner moments. Take two men of history, one of whom embodies the practical temper, touched with merely temporary purposes, and the other the sanely idealistic temper,—as Napoleon and Jesus. I speak of the latter humanly, not theologically, and I choose these men because they are so familiar. One sees them very near together beneath the proudest dome in Paris; the one surrounded by his battle-flags; the other, just above, beyond the

church door, upon his cross. As the light from the stained window fades, and you stand there in the twilight, a question knocks at the door of your soul, Which, in the long stretch of centuries by which all things and all men are judged, was the more practically efficient, this Corsican or this Nazarene? Everybody well knows. The empire of the one fell to chaos long ago; the democracy of the other is growing larger day by day. Over the tomb of the Corsican the traveler bends his head in melancholy meditation; up, up toward the life of the Nazarene the millions struggle with glad faces through the years.

The chief difference between the great men and the small men, the great civilizations and the small civilizations, is that the former will tolerate no hiatus between convinced thought and effective deed. Theirs is a Practical Idealism that is neither the traditional, shortsighted practicalness, nor the traditional futile dreaming; a Practical Idealism in harmony with the practical, but interpreting and soberly testing its real efficiency. Such men and civilizations live the truth they find, make real their ideals, and make ideal all their realities. We must spread the conviction abroad in some way until it becomes a new awakening, a second nature grafted upon modern life, that no contradiction in life can be solved in deed without solving it in thought first; and that even this is futile unless men have attained the courage to live what they think and to carry it

valiantly into their practical civilization. It is this sequestering of thought away from the world of action that has allowed the practical contradictions of our time to come to such a formidable crisis. It may be that this very crisis, perforce, will lead men to a new age of reason; an age in which the great verities will no longer be spurned or forgotten, but will assume their reasonable place in living. There have been times, now long past, when the great verities touched life very closely and favorably; when literature, and painting, and sculpture, and architecture, and music, and the institutions of society in general reflected them and by them were made great. At such times, the great verities may have been misconceived, but nevertheless they lived. To-day, a man may be acquainted with all these great human enterprises and still not find in them much that means a pervading faith in a moral order, let alone a religious order. These latter concerns have come to be regarded as things apart. If a man has time for them, very well, let him indulge in them as a something of spiritual luxury beyond the life he daily lives in the forum and the market. The time has come when our loyalties must be reversed in the name of logic and good sense. After all, there is only one loyalty for reasonable men who see things in a just perspective; a loyalty above family, business, church, and state, because it includes all these, intensifies fealty to all these, and transfigures every one of these.

If this practical meaning of ultimate truths is once apprehended by our age, the renaissance of its moral faith in them will be assured. And the most certain prophesy of any such renaissance of a people is the measure in which its practical life is already touched with a generous idealism; for a great idealism ever calls for something more,—a faith in the truths that justify it.

Herein lies the American hope. For in spite of her practical mood, America is already a nation of idealists. True, there are many who deny this; yet, to any one who knows the temper of the American people, the accusation that they are fundamentally materialistic and absorbed in the one business of amassing dollars is as stupidly silly as it is familiar. Of course we are busy developing the material resources of a new continent, we are working with matter, molding it into cities and bridges and railroads and factories; but working with matter does not of itself make one a materialist, any more than working with oils and canvas makes an artist any less a follower after the gleam. The question is not whether one is busied with matter; it is whether one is making anything worth while of it. Of matter of the crassest Michelangelo builds St. Peter's. So, I think, it is with American materialism, in spite of some undeniable tendencies to the contrary. Van Dyke characterizes the American people felicitously when he speaks of them as "a people of idealists engaged in a great practical

task."[1] Butler points out that the entire history of the country testifies to the idealism of the American people; that the first settling of America was an adventure of idealists; that the Civil War was a struggle of idealists who were willing to die for loyalty to national ideals; that the insistence upon education and the faith in the power of knowledge are the insistence and faith of idealists.[2] Royce, contending for the same truth, adds as further evidence of our idealism "the rich differentiation of our national religious life," our notable civic pride, and our welcome to new doctrines, especially such as appeal to idealism through an inspiring creed. He even comments upon the excesses of our idealism![3] Cole thinks that idealism is the chief American trait; and, answering the charge that Americans are absorbed in materialistic business, remarks that "the real thing in any life is not what we get and what we show and what we do, but it is what we think and what we feel and what we aspire to," and contends that the American idealism is to be found even in the absorption in those business interests which seem to belie it. For the joy which the American of an increasingly prevalent sort finds in his business "comes chiefly from the sense of power, from the sense of victory in struggle, from the human meaning of the thing accomplished. With

[1] Henry van Dyke, *The Spirit of America*, p. xv.
[2] Nicholas Murray Butler, *The American As He Is*, pp. 41, 68.
[3] Josiah Royce, *Race Questions and Other American Problems*, pp. 112-115.

the business man of this type, ambition is directed chiefly toward a recognition in himself of the human qualities which give him attainment—rather than toward tangible things desirable for themselves."[4]

Nay, democracy is nothing material, and it cannot be measured in dollars and cents. It does not even exist yet! It is an ideal; but for this ideal Americans have been willing to die. If you want to see idealism, go to some small western city recently builded. A street of two score ramshackle buildings may be all there is; but listen to the glowing account of what this "city" will some day be! The inhabitants may be but a few hundred now; but yonder will be the courthouse, yonder the great railway terminal, and the marts of trade have their avenues all laid out. For the old men see visions and the young men dream dreams.

II

Paradoxically enough, this very idealism has become the source of a new crisis for American democracy. For, being a serious idealism, it has taken the inevitable form of an active criticism of prevailing institutions in so far as they contravene and baffle it. The universal talk of "social reconstruction" is a symptom of something deeper than the effects of war. Through his idealism it is that the American is gradually finding himself surprised

[4] William Morse Cole, *The American Hope*, pp. 6, 7.

into a far-reaching social rebellion. For the fundamental thing in any civilization, the disturbing thing, that which unlocks most of its secrets of unrest and conflict, is to be found in what the average individual wants, what kind of life he demands to live, what sort of self he thinks he is entitled to become. This is only another way of saying that the fundamental thing in any civilization is its ethical ideal. For this and through this arises all social organization. Social institutions are functions of human desires objectified. All of them, political, economic, educational, religious, exist because men think that through them they can better get their wants fulfilled. So that, in a civilization under democratic control, social institutions ought to be reflections of the ideals of life possessed by the people, indications of the sorts of selves the people want to become, the lives they want to live.

But once formed, social institutions are notoriously conservative. Conditions sometimes arise in which the average man grows beyond them. One comes upon an age of social rebellion whenever the individual has come to want a life and imperatively to demand a life beyond the power of his social institutions to grant; when society cannot let him live the life he wants to live, be the self he wants to be.

Now, this is precisely the condition in America today; the ideals of men have outreached the democracy they have thus far been able to build. For

wonderful indeed—miraculous—would be the social organization that could keep pace with such an individual awareness as America has created and is creating. Social institutions cannot break the bonds of tradition in a day. They were first created for the privileged few; they are now suddenly to fulfill without favor the demands of the ultimate many. They arose slowly and painfully upon foundations laid deep in an ancient order; and, abruptly, they must transform themselves to an ideal born of a new and universal enlightenment which, through an international crisis, has witnessed just enough of social upheaval and of adaptation to emergency to lessen any undue respect for the divine rights of institutions. Thus, the conditions of a widespread maladjustment are fulfilled. The social order cannot answer the individual's newly conceived needs; and yet the social order is newly viewed as highly capable of even sudden change. It is not that social institutions are any worse than they were. But the individual has recently changed so much faster than they could be remolded to his heart's desire that they are far worse relatively, and seem worse absolutely.

Thus, economic and industrial justice have grown apace; but the problems of justice have been acute public matters of late, and the sense of justice has grown faster. So, of course, there is economic rebellion. But it is economic rebellion only as an expression of the individual's newly found ideal of

what a self larger than the merely economic self should be allowed to become.

So with education. The educational institution has made enormous progress. Even the World War aided it immensely with a new practical idealism. Before this, its methods had become more scientific, its curricula infinitely various, its advantages easy for the multitude. But recently intellectual needs, demands for expert efficiency, have grown still faster. So we have a distrust of the whole modern educational system, including higher education, which voices itself in such widespread criticism that one might easily be led to suppose that education is in its dotage. But this rebellion in education is only one more expression of the individual's awakening to a new ideal of life.

So, too, with the region of the beautiful. Our surroundings have become more tolerable, our cities are being planned more and more from the standpoint of esthetic interests, the ugly is being gradually eliminated from the market and the home; but men's sensibilities have been refined so much more rapidly, their tastes have been cultivated so immeasurably faster (to some extent through the new domination of French ideals), that there is even an esthetic rebellion. But this unrest, like that in economics and politics and education, is only one small part of the recent man's demand that life assume for him a new abundance.

So also with the church. Religion has broken

from its long conservatism; for some time, it has been reconstructing its doctrines in terms of new sciences and broader aspirations; it has become more tolerant, more ethical, more efficient. But it cannot keep pace with the demands of the man of modern culture, just come through an unprecedented trial of faith and reason, who may sometimes seek among the churches in vain for what his soul needs; whose reason is still unanswered in its call for those verities without which he cannot attune his life aright to the aspirations he has learned to esteem newly sacred. And the intensely practical needs of those beneath the cultural level are but vaguely and indecisively met by religious dogmas that cannot cope as successfully as they yet will with new social problems which, without an effective religious faith, cannot be permanently solved. So there is religious rebellion. But, again, it is no isolated phenomenon. It is just another token that the recent American has seen a new vision of a breadth and depth of living which his social institutions have not yet been fashioned to fulfill.

This social rebellion, however idealistically motived, might easily degenerate into sheer individualism and anarchy, were it not for the illuminating fact that American idealism happens to include a democratic vision of the common welfare. While the individual American has the liberty to cherish any ideals that he pleases, the American doctrine of liberty is not that he may *do* as he pleases. It is a

higher liberty than that; it is a liberty that harmonizes with the social good, that includes the social good in all its deeds. Otherwise, it is mere license.

This freedom to seek the social good, not by coercion, but through one's own reason, is the only kind of freedom that democracy's man desires. It is expressed in the two freedoms most prized by the American people; freedom of speech and freedom of the ballot. Through freedom of speech, every man has the chance to impress his own reason upon the rest; and, through discussion of the rational convictions of all, to come to more clarified convictions of his own, thus aiding the social reason to defensible decisions. Through the freedom of the franchise, he is given the further and decisive means by which his individual conviction can be uttered definitely and be made effective.

Thus, American idealism is saved from the empty freedom of caprice in two ways. It is freely subjected to social revision and its utterances pretend to be reasonable. Reason is, in truth, the only basis of social discussion, as it is of the individual's right to utter convictions at all. Freedom, in the American sense, is rational and social. Of whatever else I am independent, I am not independent of the social reason. Nor do I want to be; so my very subjection is the supreme expression of my freedom.

It is for this reason that social rebellion may well

bring with it the beginnings of its own solution if it arises, as it does in America, through the ethical idealism of men. In any era of social progress, the individual is ahead of his social institutions; he must be if they are to advance at all; for only in response to his demands for better things do they develop. Evolution itself, by the way, may be interpreted as a history of constructive rebellions. It presupposes not only the will to live, but, as we have seen, an upward and selective will to progress, an inherent and vital dissatisfaction with the maladjustment between the individual and his environment, together with a tendency to overturn adjustments, however momentarily perfect, by the development of new wants.

But these general reasons are not the only or the chief reasons why idealism in America is a portent of good, not of evil. First, because of the social dependence of the modern individual, his rebellion will be the more speedily translated into social reform. Second, because democracy at length recognizes this dependence as good, resulting in a deeper freedom than the individual has ever known—the deeper freedom of social self-realization—we in America tend to escape a danger that has belonged to all great social rebellions in the past; the danger that the individual will venture to obtain "his own" by annulling society and reducing it to chaos. True, lawlessness among the American people has reached an alarming degree. And this is encouraged by

the incredible laxity of the machinery of social justice. The tendencies to annul society are here in strength. They are part of a world-movement, which, in Eurpoe, has meant the overthrow of established orders. But such an outcome is simply impossible in America. Here the individual has become too complexly social on a universal scale; his institutions are too strong, because they are not outside him, but within him. So his only salvation is reformation unceasing, never dissolution. Again, the danger of social dissolution in America is minimized because the power of transformation is in the people's hands. Public opinion, when once it has attained decisive convictions, is almost immediately effective; first, through its many organs of easy dissemination; and, second, through the untrammeled franchise. This public opinion was never more efficient in dictating social reforms, never more rational, and never before so possessed with the facilities for becoming universal, when its causes are worthy.

Thus, in America at least, with the dangers of social rebellion minimized and with its ideals surer of sane effect, the individual who finds himself beyond the social organization is society's greatest asset, provided always that he is not a traitor to democracy. His idealism is not a menace, but the only certain guarantee of democracy's triumph.

III

But just here we come upon a difficulty. Just what is this new and larger ideal of life which the individual has acquired and which makes him so rebellious with the social organization as it is?

As yet, Americans are not morally certain. It is this very uncertainty about moral ideals, an uncertainty born of moral conflict and skepticism, that has been our problem from the first; issuing at last in the attempt to construct a moral order and to make plain the truths it lives by. However, we have now come upon the redeeming fact that this uncertainty is not builded entirely upon the skepticism of mere indifference, but is an uncertainty that possesses all the hope of an idealism that seeks and, seeking, bespeaks the temper, if not yet the substance, of undaunted faith. We Americans live in a future that we cannot analyze and yet that we confidently predict. The present may be as dark as you please, but we have faith that no crisis can defeat us and that in the end all will be well. As for democracy, the facts may be of as evil portent as you will; but it is the color of treason to doubt for one moment that democracy will triumph. There is no place in all America's future for Macaulay's New Zealander lamenting over a fallen civilization. America has no use for the "grouch." The pessimist is the failure. Our faith in our destinies is so incurable that even our novels and plays must have a

happy ending. The sunny side of life is the true side. Tragedy is abnormal. Faith's robust laughter is heard from Maine to California. The characteristic lack among Americans of speculative interest in ultimate philosophical questions does not arise so much from a reasoned skepticism as from an optimistic confidence that, whatever the reality of things may seem, all is or will be right with the world. This confidence even becomes a sort of sublime and simple religion, the native religion of the American mind.

So it happens that American idealism, although still undefined, is of such a nature that it means progress toward moral awareness and moral confidence; how, one might show through analyzing American ideals as they are actually emerging in our various social institutions. It is progress because, wanting the undefined, our want is serious, so that we are discontented with such vagueness; and the only way out of such pernicious vagueness is a wholesome discontent with it. Out of such idealism, if it is serious enough, persistent enough, constructive enough, will come a clearer definition of the social ideal; an ideal worthier than America has before known, since it must satisfy the critical reason that has cast aside the old ideals as narrow, insufficient, undemocratic, and unjust to the possibilities of human nature. This deeper idealism, then, which is at the heart of all our institutional distrust, is the unrest of American democracy

defining itself! This defining is of itself progress; but when the definition is achieved, then what progress! America will be truly born for the first time; for nations, as men, are defined and found worthy in terms of the worth of their purposes and of their conscious loyalty to them.

We are at the beginning of this ethical reconstruction now. Its failure would mean the failure of America for a long time, perhaps for always. For, due to the upheavals of a great world-crisis, American institutional ideals are plastic now as never before, and as they may never be again. The old institutional habits may easily regain their strength and challenge and destroy our newer dreams unless these are speedily formulated and made efficient. One is encouraged by the fact that the deeper and less obvious trends of American life are settling slowly but surely toward democratic deed and democratic awareness, especially the latter. In spite of undemocratic tendencies; in spite of loud and clamorous movements plainly destructive of democracy; in spite of the defect, which must soon be remedied, that American institutions are too abstracted from one another and therefore conflicting in their aims, and not welded together by a sufficiently defined and common purpose, they were never so self-conscious as now. The dawn of this self-consciousness is amply attested by contemporary American literature, as well as by the large currents of our life as seen in politics, eco-

nomics, and society, yes, in education and religion, which last we have seen to be emphatically setting toward a new awareness and achievement of the moral order for which America stands. Once the national consciousness was so negligible that Americans had to rely upon foreign writers for the best appreciations of their country. Within a decade has arisen a literature on America by Americans which signifies a self-criticism not even distantly approached by any other country in the history of the world. Every American institution shares in this self-discovery and appraisement; an appraisement often merciless, on the whole candid, and almost always with the courage of the national optimism. This self-criticism may well herald the time when our various and now conflicting institutions shall become functions of a well-understood national character, unified and pervaded by the one ultimate and sublating vision of the moral order and that type of American which is its hope.

Thus it is that American idealism, because of its social vision, and in spite of its social impatience; in spite, too, of its yet indefinite character and because of its optimistic courage, is an earnest of the veritable renaissance of moral faith. Out of its loyalties will grow the reasoned apprehension of the meaning of the democracy it seeks and of the truths it needs. One cannot continually argue and fight and suffer and triumph in the name of such great ideas as man's equality, his freedom, his in-

finite value, his measureless possibilities, his social and rational imperatives, without finding himself at length led, by the very exigencies of his faith, to the portals of those larger truths in which these others rest, to the spiritual democracy in which all lesser democracies live and triumph,—without faith in which there is no faith worth naming.

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